ECHOES FROM THE BATTLEFIELDS OF SOUTH AFRICA

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DUDLEY · KIDD

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BY

DUDLEY KIDD

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PREFACE.

It is with very great pleasure that I respond to the suggestion that I should write a few lines of preface to "Echoes from the Battlefields of South Africa," which I have had the opportunity of reading while passing through the press.

The Council of the South Africa General Mission rejoice in the knowledge that they are, and have so long been, partners with those whom they have been privileged to send to the foreign mission field. For they remember that King David of old, before he entered into the possession of his kingdom, and while still hunted as "a partridge in the mountains," "made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel," that "As his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff: THEY SHALL PART ALIKE."

And surely this blessed partnership includes the large and rapidly increasing band of Home Helpers of every kind, many of whom are working

quietly, and seeing but little immediate fruit of their labours. They continue to cast their bread upon the waters, and are content to wait, if need be, "many days" before they "find" it, but it is their privilege to have "part" in the joy of their partners in South Africa, who have been permitted to see such blessed immediate results of their labours. We rejoice in the wonderful way the Lord has led our beloved brethren Huskisson, Darroll, Tervet, and many others, and while we sorrow that we shall not again see the bright face of dear Ion Smyth, yet we rejoice that he has entered into the joy of his Lord, and of him we can surely say, his "works do follow" him. We are thankful to know that his mantle has fallen upon his co-worker, Mr. Taylor, and that devoted lady workers are following in the track of the other pioneers. We rejoice with all those who have been permitted to minister to the soldiers of the Queen, and thus to serve the Captain of our Salvation, and as we used to sing together in old days:—

> "Surely my Captain will remember me,
> Though but an armour-bearer I may be."

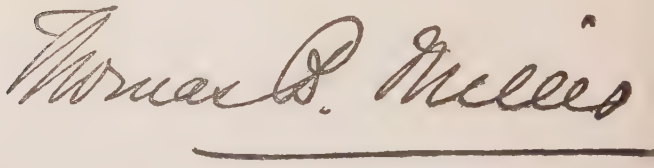
not one will be forgotten "in That Day."

That the circle of interest is a large one has been abundantly proved by the almost unprece-

dented sale of the booklets, "At Modder River," "The Surrounding of Cronje," and "At Ladysmith." Those who have read them will feel quite at home with "Echoes from the Battlefields of South Africa," and will almost envy those who read the story for the first time.

I am rather anxious lest there should appear to be any discrepancies in the various narratives. If ten truthful men were to tell the story of—say the battle of Magersfontein—there would be ten different accounts, and probably in some points these would appear to be contradictory. Nothing but a perfect knowledge of every feature of the landscape and of all the details of the battle would enable one to piece together the various narratives into one perfect, harmonious whole. One is reminded of the puzzle maps of our childhood when we got very impatient over some awkwardly-shaped piece we could not fit in anywhere; but at last we found the fault was, not with the piece, but with ourselves. The information in this book, and the booklets which have preceded it, comes from many and various sources, and though the evidence has been carefully sifted, possibly some chaff may be found amongst the wheat, and no one will be more thankful for conviction than the authors.

May the good Lord abundantly bless this fresh message from Himself, and may many thereby become partakers of the good work amongst the soldiers, for the need is very great.



July 26th, 1900. *Chairman of Coun*

INTRODUCTION.

THE South Africa General Mission has been carrying on mission work amongst soldiers in South Africa ever since it was founded. Thousands of soldiers have passed through our various Soldiers' Homes at Cape Town, Wynberg, and Maritzburg during the past ten or twelve years.

The work was started some twenty years ago by Mrs. Osborne, who handed her work over to the South Africa General Mission—then called the Cape General Mission—when it was founded. Ever since, our Soldiers' Homes have been the centre of a vigorous work amongst the troops.

When the war broke out it was most natural that the various men who were in charge of these homes should go to the front with the men they knew so well. The men expected us to do what we could to help them in their hour of danger and need. Consequently Mr. Percy Huskisson and Mr. Darroll went up to Orange River with the main column, seeking to enter the Free State, while Mr. Smyth pushed on from Maritzburg to Ladysmith with the forces in Natal. He was ultimately shut in Ladysmith when that place was besieged, and contracted enteric fever

while seeking to help the men. A few days after Ladysmith was relieved, he died from the fever.

Our Mission has a story to tell, which covers almost every possible phase of mission work during war-time. Many other organizations have done good service in some one or two directions; but owing to our being a South African Mission on the spot, and not a new importation from home, our work forms a sort of microcosmos of the Christian work carried on during the war.

The account of our doings forms a genera representative survey of the various efforts put forth to help the soldiers. To start with, our story covers the exciting period of the Jameson Raid; the declaration of war in the Transvaal, with the experiences passed through during the great exodus from Johannesburg, where we have had a very flourishing work for years; the meeting of the troopships at the Cape Town Docks; work amongst the troops in Cape Town; the exciting scenes of mission work on the battlefield during the actual engagements; the strange experiences of Christian work in the besieged town of Ladysmith; the very important department of meeting the temporal and spiritual needs of the sick and wounded at the great Base Hospital, where we have a large marquee in the hospital grounds for

the exclusive use of the wounded; special facilities for working amongst the men of the Army Medical Corps and St. John's Ambulance in our Soldiers' Home at Wynberg, which is just outside the hospital grounds; the temporary opening of a Soldiers' Home on a battlefield (said to be the first ever thus erected in the history of the British Army); and finally, the past work amongst the Cape Mounted Rifles who have shown such conspicuous bravery at the front.

There is thus a story to tell which is worth recording, when so many eyes are centred upon soldiers and South Africa; and this account forms a sort of compact specimen page of the brightest aspect of the dark and terrible book of war. Our Mission can justly say that its connection with soldiers is not a passing fad caught from the infectious germs of what is often playfully called "scarlet fever," for our Mission was born in a soldier's home; consequently a red coat is no second love to us. Nor can we be justly accused of being hysterically carried off our feet with the sudden and, I fear, ephemeral popularity of soldiers, for we have proved ourselves their friends for a dozen years, through good report and ill.

With regard to the arrangement of chapters, it seems best to trace the history of the war by start-

ing with a brief picture of mission work in Johannesburg during the days of the Jameson Raid; then follows a short picture of the novel experiences in the Transvaal when war was declared; after this we pass in review Modder River, Magersfontein, Paardeberg, Kimberley, and Bloemfontein. Then we peep into besieged Ladysmith, and return to the Base Hospital at Wynberg to describe our work amongst the sick and wounded. As the experiences of meeting transports is practically co-extensive with the whole war, it is described towards the close of our story. Then a short account of our past twelve years' apprenticeship in soldiers' work, together with an outline of the proposed future work, is given. A closing chapter is devoted to a brief account of the past work of our mounted missionaries who travelled about amongst the Cape Mounted Riflemen.

The account given in these pages is an unvarnished tale, without any claim to literary style, as it had to be hurriedly written in three days, amidst all the bustle of mission work and preparation for a five months' missionary tour from Cape Town to the Zambesi.

CAPE TOWN,

May, 1900.

CHAPTER I.

THE DECLARATION OF WAR IN THE TRANSVAAL.

WHATEVER history may ultimately say as to the relation of the Jameson Raid to the present war, it is a fact beyond dispute that things at Johannesburg have been very strained and unhealthy ever since that crime was committed. This strain has been felt in nearly every phase of life in the Transvaal, and we have felt it, as a Mission, in our work.

The Raid came upon us as a thunderbolt from a blue sky. It is true that there had been much excitement over the meetings of the Transvaal National Union, and that the abuses of the Pretoria oligarchy were becoming rank beyond all the people's power of forbearance—which possibly was not very high. A great mass meeting had been announced for December 27th, 1895, and feeling about the meeting was running very strong. This gathering was postponed till

the 6th of January, but in the meantime the famous manifesto was published on December 26th. A few days later it was announced in the Third Edition of *The Star* that very grave news had just been received; Dr. Jameson, with 700 men and Maxims, had crossed the border, and was making post-haste for Johannesburg.

Of course the town was in commotion at once. Things were not improved next morning when it was found that bread had doubled in price. Imagine what it felt like to walk out into the streets one fine morning and to find a number of armed men dressed in khaki parading the streets on horseback. Gazing at these mounted men with rifles slung over their backs, you felt inclined to rub your eyes to make sure you were not dreaming, or that you had not, somehow or other, tumbled into the middle of a story-book The town was one seething mass of the wildest rumours, and no one knew what to believe.

It soon leaked out that a Reform Committee was forming a town guard to replace the Transvaal police, who were being withdrawn; and soon the streets were paraded by these amateur police, who were distinguished by the white band round their arm. It was a common remark that the town was never so free from crime as when the

"Zarps" (as the Dutch police are always called, on account of the initials on their coats, which stand for the Dutch of the South African Republic Police), were withdrawn.

Business was suspended, and shop windows were barricaded, while refugees poured in from all the outlying districts. We at once turned our Mission Hall into a refuge for women and children, and soon had it crowded, almost entirely with Dutch people.

The trains to the Cape and Natal were crowded to excess, and thousands of people flocked to see the trains off with their compressed mass of mixed humanity. Johannesburg is one of the most cosmopolitan places in the world, and so every nationality was represented in this crowd. There were English, Dutch, French, Germans, Russians, Americans, Italians, Scandinavians, Malays, Indians, Chinese, and Japanese.

The streets were crowded for several days with vast throngs of people all waiting for news. Outside the Goldfields building there was a dense mass of anxious men waiting to catch the slightest piece of news. *The Star* brought out "extras" every few hours, and bicycle despatch-riders and mounted men would come tearing up to the Goldfields office with news.

The day on which Jameson surrendered, thousands of us were waiting in the street for hours, in expectation of seeing him ride in triumph from Fordsburg at any moment. A mounted despatch-rider came in that afternoon in a tremendous hurry, his horse a mass of foam and dust. The crowd demanded the news outside the Goldfields building. The man declared that he had seen Jameson close to Fordsburg, and that in a few moments he would be coming over the rise. The people were intensely excited at this news. These despatch-riders came in every half-hour, and were always pressed for the latest information. However, a friend of mine doubted this story, and guessed the man was fooling the people, and so he took hold of him by the coat and said, "You are telling lies—I can see it in your face. Own that you have not seen Jameson at all!" The poor fellow was so taken aback that he confessed the whole thing was a hoax, and he was very roughly handled by the crowd.

Only those who actually experienced life in Johannesburg during those few days of wild rumour can understand the state of turmoil the town was in. Walking down the street a friend would stop you and say, "Have you heard the news? The Boers have two, twenty, two hundred

guns"—no figure was too big to please Dame Rumour—"trained on the town; in half an hour they are going to shell the place." As you were expressing doubt as to this point some passing stranger would join you and say he had just heard from a friend of his, who had been told by another friend, that Jameson had captured all the Boer guns. A small group would have gathered round you by this time, and then someone would express the opinion that what Jameson ought to do was to turn the Maxims on to the Boers. A man on the edge of the ring would just hear the latter half of the sentence and would become the focus of the latest news, and, going down to "The Chains," would say that he had heard that Jameson had caught the Boers in the open and had turned the Maxims on to them. Two men hearing this would say that, if this were so, then probably hundreds of Boers would have been killed. The next person who told this story added that fully a thousand Boers were killed—news is no good if not definite—and that all their guns would probably have been taken. The next person who told the story left out the word "probably," and so the rumour increased its volume and interest.

The people were so excited that they gave you

liberties which usually would have been withheld. Many were the straight religious talks we had with people in the streets during those few days. People listened to anything a man had to say, though they probably soon forgot what they heard.

In the midst of all this excitement we kept on our Open-Air Meetings in the Market-Square. Crowds would gather; then men would come running up thinking that some political affair was on, and many would turn away in disgust when they discovered that it was a religious meeting, while others would stand and listen to us.

After the Raid the town never seemed to quite settle down to its old condition—there was a restlessness in the air. This, of course, grew stronger for some time before war was declared; the tension increased, and people felt that nothing could ever end this strained state of things except war. Weeks of very weary uncertainty preceded the declaration of war, and crowds had left the place. It was said that some ten thousand had left in one month. For some weeks before the final rupture many of the shops had their windows barricaded, and there was great distress amongst the people.

The relief work was organized and supported

by many of the wealthy firms. The Relief Committee comprised the leading men of the city, coupled with many of the ministers and others, and the town was divided up into districts. An empty shop adjoining our Mission Hall was used as a depot for relief work; and, as our property is in the very heart of the town, the largest amount of the relief work centred there, for our district was very large. This depot was open every other day, and it usually took from ten in the morning till three or four in the afternoon to get through the work. Two men were kept busy at nothing else but weighing out groceries and serving them out upon the receipt of orders presented, which had to be signed by those who were appointed to examine into the need of the applicants. It was a very striking feature of this work that no distinction was made as to race or colour, and many Dutch people received assistance.

Our workers joined heartily in this work, and helped the other ministers or laymen of other churches who gave up their time to this work. Our Mission has a large staff of lady workers, and several of these were kept very busy in keeping in touch with the people who came for help. They visited the people in their homes and reported as to the merits of the applications,

Of course, our meetings were kept up to the very end, and the congregations continued to be of fair size, in spite of the thousands who had left the town.

At last the tension ended when the declaration of war was made. British subjects had notice to leave the country within sixteen days, unless they obtained a permit from the Government to remain behind. The scenes at the railway station were a sort of repetition of the times experienced at the Jameson Raid. Huge crowds would gather to see the trains off to Cape Town or Natal. The trains were started from the old Fordsburg Station and did not stop at Park, which is the usual station patronized at Johannesburg. The platforms and lines were packed with one heaving mass of humanity. The women and children were first placed in the carriages, and then the men filled up all the available coal trucks, of course having no protection from the weather, and no seats to sit on. The Dutch Officials did all they could, and were most polite during this trying time. The luggage used to be piled up by the side of the lines in solid masses some ten feet thick and about a hundred yards long, and special trains had to be run to take this to the border.

Day after day train-loads of armed burghers

were sent off to the front. They seemed a strange and motley crew of old men with grey hair, and mere boys. As these trains passed through the station, the men going to the front would cheer vigorously, and the crowds on the station would give counter cheers.

So great was the crush that it was very difficult even to get tickets, and in one case our people had to wait for three hours, vainly endeavouring to secure a ticket, and finally had to abandon the idea and "tip" the guard to give the ticket in the train.

Several of our workers intended to stay at Johannesburg for mission work during the war. So about twelve months' stock of provisions was laid in. All the spare cash was buried in case the Boers might want to commandeer it, each of our workers being told where the money was buried, in case anything happened to the worker in charge.

Adjoining our Mission Hall we have a Christian literature depot where we sell English and Dutch Bibles, tracts, texts, hymn books, and so forth. There was a great run on our Dutch stock, and case after case of Dutch Testaments were ordered up from Cape Town by telegram, and were sold out immediately. Many of our Dutch friends

came to buy Bibles to take with them to the front, and they all told us how sorry they were that they had to go and fight. Our Mission has many English and Dutch workers, who have lived together for years in perfect harmony; and a number of Dutch people regularly attend our meetings, many of them being amongst our warmest friends. Some who had been blessed in our work came to say good-bye to our workers, and with tears in their eyes bade farewell, and asked us to have some prayer with them before they went to the front. We have heard that some of these have been killed in the war. What gaps we shall find when we get back to Johannesburg! One young fellow who was in the Post Office, and who was always to be found in our open-air ring when his duty let him get out, told us that all the officials in the Post Office had been commandeered, but that many of them had run away over the border to shirk their duty. He said he felt that it was not right to have been in the service of the Transvaal for years and then to run away when they got into trouble. But he said that he would give anything not to have to fight, for he did not even know how to hold a rifle.

Of course the natives were very restless, and as we have a Mission Hall amongst them at the Rand

they kept asking us such questions as: "Have you heard from your Queen yet?" "Is the Great White Queen going to fight?" &c. The natives were soon sent over the border, and as there were not sufficient cattle trucks for them all, many were marched in batches of some four or five thousand out of the country.

When we applied for permits to remain, it seemed as if there would be no difficulty in the matter, but at the last moment it was found that these permits could not be granted to the men; the women might stay, but not the men. On seeking an interview with the Mining Commissioner on the matter, the clerks told Mr. Frank Huskisson that it was no good trying to see Mr. Van de Merwe as he had made up his mind not to allow the Mission workers to remain, for they had identified themselves with the relief work, which was looked on as a sort of Uitlander concern. Our Dutch friends were very grieved at this decision, and even the assistant magistrate appealed to the Commission who had the final decision on this matter, explaining that it was the wish of the Dutch people that our workers should remain. However, the Commission was not to be moved, though they gave no reason for their decision.

Only a few days remained before the stipulated time for leaving the country expired, and so our workers made our large Mission Hall ready, in case it should be needed by the Government (which refused us permission to stay!) for a hospital.

The train our workers left by was crowded with some two thousand people, and the lady workers were placed in comfortable carriages, while the men got into an old coal truck with sixty-three other men.

When the train reached the Border of the Transvaal everyone was detrained for three hours while all luggage was examined and the passengers searched. Many people have told us that all their money was confiscated at the Border, but our workers found no difficulty in this direction. At about ten o'clock on the following evening the train reached the southern border of the Orange Free State, stopping some two miles from Norval's Pont. The line to the Pont was guarded by the Boers who had undermined it. These last two miles had to be covered on foot, and the luggage was all piled up on the veldt. As the night was very dark, things looked somewhat unpleasant. As a Mission we have received nothing but kindness from the Dutch. We are aware that others tell a

THE DISEMBARKATION OF TROOPS, CAPE TOWN DOCKS

different tale, but feel it is only fair for us to place on record the unvarying kindness of the Dutch to our Mission. A Dutchman, seeing our difficulty, very kindly arranged to drive the lady workers and the heavy luggage to Norval's Pont, while the men walked across the veldt. They all met at the platform of Norval's Pont Station soon after midnight. No one felt inclined for sleep, for the two thousand passengers made things lively. So our people piled their luggage up on the platform —there was no covered accommodation worth speaking of—and began singing some good, old-fashioned hymns, such as "Rock of Ages." The people at once crowded round and seemed to enjoy this sort of informal meeting for a long time, many of the people knowing our workers personally. Next morning a Cape Government train arrived, and our workers all got into a compartment together, and had a pleasant journey down to Cape Town.

There was a great gathering of the clans at Cape Town, and shortly afterwards plans were made for workers to go to the front with the troops, while many doors were opened for Mission work among the troops disembarking, and amongst the wounded men.

CHAPTER II.

OFF TO THE FRONT.

(Modder River and Magersfontein.)

It was most natural that the two men who had been in charge of our Soldiers' Homes at Cape Town and Wynberg should move on with their men to the front. It is not to be wondered at that many men would wish to go and see what war is like, and take a semi-pleasure trip just for the mere excitement. And doubtless there have been adventurers who have done this, but Mr. Percy Huskisson and Mr. Darroll, who had been working for a long time amongst soldiers, did not go up-country for the sake of excitement. They felt they ought to be with their men in the time of danger and need.

It is wonderful how completely a Soldiers' Home worker gets to look on the regiment among which he works as his own property ; and so he invariably talks about them as "our men" or "my men."

S.A.G.M. SOLDIERS' HOME, WYNBERG.

FIELD BAKERY AT MODDER RIVER.

Passes had to be obtained from the Military authorities before our workers could proceed to the front. After some delay, these permits were kindly granted, and armed with their passes Mr. Percy Huskisson and Mr. Darroll started for Orange River.

In the meantime, Mr. Smyth, who had been in charge of our Maritzburg Soldiers' Home, went up to Ladysmith, and was with the troops at Elandslaagte, and returned to Ladysmith, where he was shut up during the siege. We shall return to his story later on ; but let us first of all see what happened to the men who went up towards the Free State and Kimberley.

The journey to Orange River was broken at De Aar, which forms the junction of the Western and Midland systems of railways. At this spot Mr. and Mrs. Osborne-Howe were carrying on work amongst the troops, as they had come out to the Colony for a year's sojourn. They converted a back-yard into a temporary Soldiers' Home, which was much appreciated by the men stationed at De Aar. Later on a large marquee was erected and a number of workers were engaged to work this most important spot, all being under Mr. and Mrs. Howe's superintendence.

Our workers spent a week-end at this spot, and

were quickly "inspanned" for work by Mr. Howe. On the Sunday morning they took the Nonconformist Parade Service in the North Camp for the Yorkshires and Field Artillery; then in the afternoon they addressed a meeting amongst the Berkshires in the South Camp. It was striking to notice what interest many of the officers seemed to take in such work, for as yet no chaplain had been sent to De Aar.

One striking feature of Soldiers' work is that you never know where you will meet the men amongst whom you have worked in the past. They form a very shifting parish, and as soon as you know them well they are ordered off here or there. It is most cheering to find the men who used to frequent the Home writing to us from distant countries, or meeting friends in England and speaking in glowing terms of the happy days spent in the "dear old Soldiers' Home." Thus at De Aar many Reservists came up to our workers and reminded them of the olden days at the Cape Town or Wynberg Soldiers' Homes. They seemed so glad to meet our workers again.

While at De Aar the first horrors of war faced our men, for a number of wounded men from the Belmont encounter arrived at De Aar in saloon carriages.

On Monday our workers went northwards in a military train, and soon found themselves in a sort of duplicate South African Aldershot. The first effect of being suddenly plunged into a camp of some ten thousand men was to make them feel remarkably small. Naturally, in such a camp everybody is bent on his own business, and it is very hard to obtain any information. The experience was a perfectly new one to them, and they had not the least idea what they ought to do. They thought the best thing to do would be to try and discover where the Commandant was to be found, that they might report themselves. So they asked some men who were passing by, and were told there was no Commandant. This was not very satisfactory, for it only made them feel a little smaller, if that were possible. So they wandered about the Camp and the Provost Marshal met them and asked to see their permits. These permits were granted by the Officer Commanding the Lines of Communication, and so the Provost Marshal told them that those passes were no use unless they were backed. They were advised to go and see the Senior Chaplain. But he threw a fresh douche of cold water on to their already depressed spirits by telling them that there was no work they could do, as the spiritual wel-

fare of the men was fully looked after. But he advised them to go back to the Provost Marshal.

With this cold cheer they hunted for the Provost Marshal, who told them it was no use coming to him; if the Chaplain could not help them, then they had better go to the Chief Staff Officer; possibly he might do something to help them, and possibly not. So there was nothing to do but to try and find the Chief Staff Officer. This was no easy work; after hunting high and low they at last found out his office, but he said, "It's no use you coming to me; you had better go to Lord Methuen's A.D.C. first, and then come back to me after you have seen him." Fortunately, Mr. Percy Huskisson has plenty of "cheek"—I know not what other word to use. However, the A.D.C. was not to be seen that day. So, again wondering what to do, they saw the Provost Marshal coming towards them, and a slight hope dawned in their hearts that he would have pity on them; but all their hopes were dashed to the ground by his telling them the cheering news that if the military police found them in the Camp without having their passes backed, it would fare roughly with them.

Surely, nine men out of ten would have thought they had enough of Mission Work at the front by

this time. It was now getting late and there was no chance of getting their passes backed that day. As Mr. Huskisson knew the country fairly well, he suggested to Mr. Darroll that they should ride out on their bicycles, which they had fortunately brought with them, and spend the night at Hopetown, a little village some ten or twelves miles from Orange River, where we once held a very successful Mission in former days. The road is a very dreary one, and they had not the happiest position to brood over as they rode along the dusty road.

The new morning brought them cheer, and they rode back to Orange River Camp, only to be greeted with the news that eight war correspondents had been refused permission to go on with the troops. Nevertheless, where there's a will there's a way. They determined to see Lord Methuen's A.D.C., no matter what it cost them. An interview at last rewarded their persistence, and he sent them off to the Chief Staff Officer. But he was out, and could not be found. However, Colonel Northcote saw them instead, and was exceedingly kind, and as soon as he found out their business he at once gave them permission to put up their tent and do what they wished, within reason. Colonel Northcote was so extremely kind

to them that when he fell in an engagement soon after, our men felt they had indeed lost a friend.

They pitched their tent within about a stone's throw from the graves of two officers who were killed at the Belmont fight, and began to shake down to camp life. They soon became accustomed to the usual bugle calls, and to the sentry's "Halt! Who goes there?" There were various regiments encamped at Orange River, as the bridge, which was a mile and a half away, had to be strongly guarded. So they found plenty of work to do.

Some dozen years ago I spent a week at Orange River, and used to wander around the kopjes and along the river bank, seeking to throw off a sharp attack of Kimberley fever: how peaceful everything was then; you could walk for hour after hour over the veldt and never meet a single soul. Every here and there a little meer-cat would sit up erect, with its tail cocked up in the air, as if it were watching sentry over the bare rocks. Now and then a hawk would come soaring in circles to see what the solitary man was after; far in the distance a springbock would go leaping over the vast plains, jumping over boulders and small thorn bushes with the utmost grace of movement; while a little later on a snake would glide away like a

guilty, surprised thing, as it was frightened while enjoying its warm sun-bath on the baking sand. In those still days the slightest noise would be echoed back from the deep silence of the kopjes and kloofs, and then the eternal peace would once more settle down and brood over the barren sand, while the pitiless sun shone down in its splendour, baking the kopjes to a deep red-brown colour.

But now the busy camp of ten thousand men changed the whole aspect of the veldt; all was bustle and commotion; a thousand tents studded the plain, and the kopjes awoke from their long, calm dream, answering by echoes to the bugle calls; while dust, sand, flies, locusts, lizards, ants, and other innumerable kinds of insects which ever swarm in the hot climate, made life lively.

After getting accustomed to these trivial details, and learning how to drink water of a very questionable colour, and eat a fair proportion of sand with their food, which, by the way, the soldiers appositely call "African pepper," our men went across the river, armed with an extra special permit, and visited their old friends of the Loyal Lancaster Regiment, who had been so long stationed at Cape Town. It was most cheering to receive a very warm welcome from the Christian men in the

regiment and to find that, in spite of all the hardships they had to endure, and danger they had to face, they were still good soldiers of Jesus Christ. A shady nook by the river-side is a favourite resort up-country, and reminds one of Pauline days when the great Apostle went to the spot at the river-side where prayer was wont to be made. The old hymn, "Like a river glorious," may sound very sweet on the lake at Keswick, but it sounds sweeter still by the side of one of our African rivers, when sitting under the grateful shadow of willows on a baking hot day. At the river-side they had some very sweet times of fellowship and prayer with the Christian soldiers; and it was good to hear them testify how they had been kept "secretly in His pavilion from the strife of tongues," when exciting war news reached the camp. On all sides in South Africa we see Christians who have suffered immeasurable spiritual loss through a lack of self-control over their spirit, when thinking and talking about the war. The lower impulses of human nature have a fearful chance of coming to the surface, unrecognized, at such a time.

On the Sunday, services were arranged amongst the Yorkshires, who had recently come up from De Aar, and who had taken up the most extreme

position across the river. The time spent with them was as refreshing to our workers as to the soldiers, for it was most interesting to hear one and another tell of God's faithfulness during the days of war.

Of course, the vast majority of the soldiers are utterly indifferent to spiritual matters, and often the atmosphere is filled with blasphemy and curses. But God has His own people who are kept clean and pure, even in an army on the field.

In the hospital and elsewhere, our men were able to distribute a large quantity of writing paper, and penny Gospels, which were generally very eagerly accepted. One of these Gospels was possibly the means of saving a man's life, for he placed it next to his "first dressing" packet, and a bullet struck this and glanced off the hard cover of the Gospel without wounding the man; he very naturally used to exhibit this Gospel to his friends in camp.

While they were waiting to move on to Modder River they were able to hold many small prayer meetings with the men, as well as some services, and felt they were amply repaid for all the trouble they had in getting their passes backed. It was here that they held their first service for the Highland Brigade; this took place on their last Sunday

before the battle of Modder River, and they had an enormous crowd of men at the meeting. Thus commenced our close connection with the Highland Brigade at the front.

After great difficulty again, permission was granted to them to move on to Modder River. Our men wanted to go with the column, but were told that there was so much difficulty with the water problem that they would have to follow in a baggage train later on. Finding such a train about to start, they jumped into an open truck, and settled down as well as they could. After sunset they heard that the Boers were trying to cut the line, and so the train had to stop for the night at a siding in the open veldt. Being the rainy season it was not remarkable that a heavy thunderstorm should sweep over the country during the night. The heavy thunderclouds generally begin to gather at about mid-day, or a little later. These lowering clouds then soon grow dark and heavy, and after sunset pour down a torrent of rain which often makes the veldt into a lake. Umbrellas are quite useless as a protection against these semi-tropical showers, which come down in sheets of water. Our workers were exposed to this storm all night, and being in an open truck they were drenched to the skin, and

had to pass the night in this miserable plight. How eagerly did they long for the dawn! At last the long, wet night was over and in the morning the train moved on to Modder River. This was the day after the Modder River battle, and many dead bodies were still lying unburied when they arrived, though these were being buried with all possible speed.

This was their first experience of active service at the front, and arriving early in the morning, after having no food for twenty hours, they went up to see the column. On their return to the train they found it had gone away with their rugs and waterproofs, and they could see another heavy thunderstorm gathering for the night.

Here they had to commence drawing rations from the Army Service Corps, a privilege which had been granted them at the head office of the Lines of Communication in Cape Town.

Having no spare clothing, no rugs, no tent, and no shelter, they decided to spend the night in a looted house, and were thankful to have even a bare room to sleep in. But a friend came to the rescue. Mr. Huskisson had in olden days been at Modder River holding meetings for the railway men, and so he knew Mr. Westerman, of the Cape Government Railways. And in their hour of need

who should turn up but Mr. Westerman! He very kindly found them a place to live in, and it turned out that there was a schoolroom at Modder River which Mr. Huskisson longed to get hold of to use as a temporary Soldiers' Home. He discovered that Mr. Westerman had the key, who most kindly placed the building at our disposal and it was soon fitted out for a Soldiers' Home. As there were very few brick buildings at Modder River, our "Home" was envied by many people. Some of the military people were very anxious to secure the building, and urged Mr. Huskisson to let them have it. Here his "cheek" came in to the advantage of the soldiers, for he refused to give up the key, having won the building in fair fight. When pressed to give it up, he said, "I'll not give the key up to anyone, unless I get a written order from Lord Methuen." This silenced all the "bluff."

The next thing to do was to put up some sort of sign board, announcing that this building was for the use of the soldiers. Some chalk was obtained, and our men set to work to chalk up on the buildings the words, "Soldiers' Home," in large letters. One of the Church of England Chaplains kindly helped in this matter, and proved a good sign-writer!

SOLDIERS' HOME, MODDER RIVER

In Africa one has to turn one's hand to every sort of work.

We are told that this is the first time in the history of the British Army that a Soldiers' Home has been opened on a battlefield. This fact evidently seemed to strike some of the officers, for two were overheard chatting together as they passed the building. One said, "Well, who ever heard of a Soldiers' Home being opened on a battlefield before?"

This innovation was very warmly welcomed by the officers and men, and it was packed from morning till night with people anxious to write letters home. We supplied notepaper free, and at one time all the available paper at Modder River was bought up by our workers, who finally could only secure some double foolscap which had to be cut up to proper size. And who can tell what this one department of the work has meant to many a mother, or wife, in the Old Country! Letter-writing on a campaign is not easy work, and it is so easy to excuse one's self from writing, by thinking that it is so hard to get even a rough table to write on. But some eighteen shillings-worth of paper was given away in this home every day, gratis, and thousands and thousands of letters were posted in our post-office box. How many a

mother at home received the last letter her boy ever wrote, ere he fell at that dreadful fight at Magersfontein, owing to the facility offered by this Soldiers' Home. How glad we are that we could do just a little to let these lads have a piece of paper and an envelope, and a table to write on, before they laid down their lives for Queen and country. Again we can say that this one department of the work was itself well worth all the cost of the work at the front. What sacred memories will gather round the letters written home from that temporary Soldiers' Home, as the old mother unlocks her secret drawer where she keeps the treasured letter from her brave boy.

The next thing to be done was to try and make some arrangements for a temperance bar, as all our Soldiers'·Homes need this as a *sine quâ non*. English readers may hear about Modder River and picture to themselves some snug little town lying far away in the veldt; but in reality it is a very simple place. By the river-side lie a few houses, and a hotel or rustic inn, where people from Kimberley spend the Bank Holiday. And these few houses lie in a great, bare stretch of veldt, through which the sluggish river winds its way with its fringe of trees. It is, therefore, very hard to get supplies. However, after a great

deal of running about Mr. Huskisson managed to get a little sugar here, and some lime juice there; while at a third place he obtained some flour and baking powder, and again, some tea and a few raisins or sultanas.

These priceless things were gathered together, and the largest bath that could be found at Modder River was "commandeered," as the Dutch would say, and it formed a splendid vessel to make lemonade in. There was considerable difficulty about the water supply. The river was the only source available, but how could it be brought to the Home in sufficient quantities? Besides, there were some dead horses seen floating in the river, and the mud in the water did not reduce the difficulties. If my Dutch is not at fault, Modder River means Muddy River. But this is a trifle in South Africa. We are marching on to the Vaal, or dun-coloured River; and what does *mud* matter then? Often in my long journeys through the low districts of Portuguese territory, after weary hours of marching over burning sand and waterless plains, beside the lumbering ox wagon, I have spied a river-bed in the distance—tired and thirsty one hails with delight the prospect of some tea. On coming to the river, what do we find? Just a few

large mud pools, in which a hundred oxen have been trampling. In disgust we turn to a distant side of the pool, and find some green, stagnant water with a thick, green slime on the top. Carefully brushing this back we dip our pannikin into the water and some rich bubbles of fetid gas come gurgling to the surface. But thirst overcomes all scruples, and so we fill our kettle and make our tea. On pouring it out we find it has a rich green colour, but even this is a God-send at such times.

The difficulty of getting the dirty water from the river was solved through the kindness of the officers, who allowed us the use of a regimental water cart. The lime juice, sugar, and lemon essence were all mixed in the bath, and the men flocked round, with tins of all sorts and styles, to get a drink. Some brought their pannikins, others brought old tins which had been used for preserving meat or jam in. Later on, some of the men collected a small sum amongst themselves and bought a supply of tin mugs for the men to use. Very soon the whole bathful of lemonade (?) vanished, and was said to be first-rate. The prices charged for refreshments were kept to the Cape Town list of charges, even though the cost of things was so heavy. This was very much appreciated by the men.

When the lemonade was all finished, our workers turned their minds to the supply of tea. Again the problem presented itself as to how to boil sufficient water for the purpose. And again Mr. Westerman came to our rescue. He lent our men some large, empty oil drums, which had to be well scoured out. Half a dozen of these were cleaned and placed side by side and filled with water, and then a fire was kindled around them. Thus a good supply of tea was provided, which the men declared to be excellent. Of course the tea, like all our refreshments, was sold below cost price. It may be asked why we sold things below cost. The reason is very simple. The soldiers are always apt to be fleeced by unscrupulous people at a time like this, and we wanted to let them see that we were at the front to help them, and not to make money out of them. The supply of tea, however, only held out for two days, and then no more could be obtained for love or money. But two cooks were kindly lent from the Argyll and Sutherlands who used the flour, sugar, and sultanas which our men had brought, and turned out some cake which very soon disappeared, like the rest of the refreshments.

It is with great pleasure that we can record the fact that many of the soldiers help the expenses

of the Soldiers' Homes at Cape Town and Wynberg by gifts of money at regular intervals. They kept this up when they went to the front, and one man used to give £1 and another used to bring 18s. out of his earnings, while others brought smaller sums, as they sent more home to their relations. One lad who had regularly given us some financial help ceased to do so when he got to the front, and one day came to our workers in sore trouble. He said he felt condemned for having stopped his gifts, and from that day he started again to help the work financially. Does not this sort of thing put many of us to shame and make us blush when we think how little pay these men get?

Later on, extra supplies arrived from Cape Town, and tea and lemonade were plentiful. As it was impossible to get the railway people to convey twelve hundred pounds of sugar from Cape Town to Modder River, we solved the difficulty by using saccharine, which is 500 times as strong as sugar. It will show how much the men appreciated this effort to supply them with teetotal drinks when we mention that sometimes the bath was filled ten times a day to keep pace with the demand for drinks. The weather was very hot, and no wonder the men were thirsty.

The total quantity sold per diem came to about 200 gallons. And all this vanished in penny-worths! Of course, many people helped us in this effort, one lady sending fifty pound packets of tea for our use. On one day, Mr. Huskisson took £25 in sales of drinks alone, losing about £5 over the transaction; while another day he took £27 in a similar way.

Then about 600lb. of biscuits and from 500lb. to 1,000lb. of cake were often sold in the course of a single day. But this was all capped by the last programme which our men went in for, as they put up a notice that afternoon tea would be supplied gratis. For many afternoons in succession they gave away over 4,000 cupfuls of tea to the men at these afternoon tea-parties. And while we are talking about figures we may add that during their stay at Modder River alone, they gave away upwards of 60,000 sheets of note-paper and envelopes to be used in our Home for letter-writing, a large part of this paper being given to us for this purpose by Messrs. Dickinson and Co. The bath which had served as a lemonade bottle had to do duty as teapot, and when the tea was given away free the men turned up with all sorts of articles to serve as mugs. Some brought their water bottles, others came

with six or eight water bottles to get tea for their friends, and some came with old condensed milk tins, jam tins, meat tins, in fact, any sort of tins. In this way, twelve bathfuls of tea would vanish in the afternoon, which meant a quantity of 240 gallons. The men declared that it was the best tea in the camp, and probably it was.

A work of this magnitude could not escape the attention of Lord Methuen, who came down to inspect the Home, in which he seemed very interested. Anyhow, he showed his appreciation by sending round a cheque for £5 to help on the work.

This material side of the work is mentioned first, as it is the part of the work that is most visible, and which appeals to the largest section of readers. But while we feel that it is a splendid thing to render any kind of self-forgetting service to others, still the main thing we are bent on is the spiritual benefit of the men. And when you show a man that you are really anxious to help him outwardly, you find the way to his heart very much more open than if you began by simply preaching to him. The very cup of cold water shall not lose its reward. Surely this does not mean that we are to receive back from God a blessing which will compensate our selfishness for

WAITING THEIR TURN TO WRITE LETTERS IN OUR SOLDIERS' HOME, MODDER RIVER.

AFTERNOON TEA AT SOLDIERS' HOME, MODDER RIVER.

any sacrifice we make. What if the reward which the cup of cold water brings be an increased capacity, or better chance of helping men in spiritual and temporal things? Enlarged capacity for service is the highest reward a man can desire.

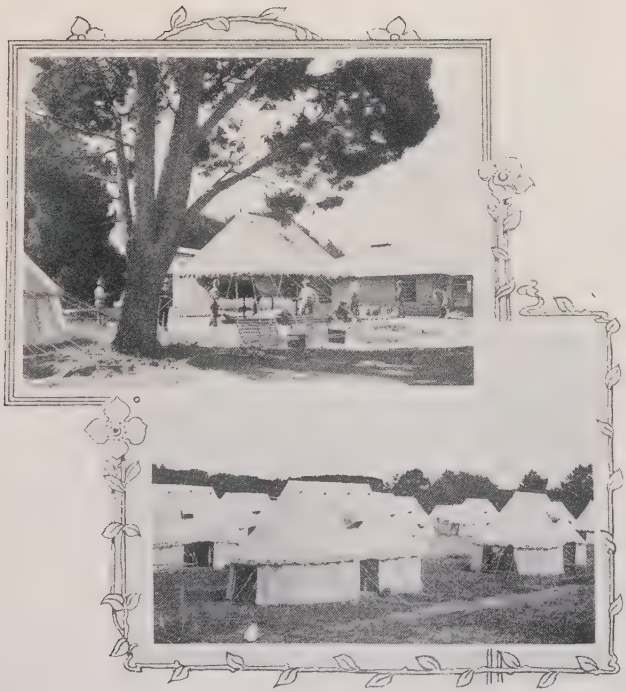
Be that as it may, the result of helping men in regard to food and drink gave an open door as nothing else could. Mr. Huskisson had seen the spiritual side of the work swamped by the despotism of the bar at other Homes near the front, and he was determined not to let the spiritual side of his own work be thus swamped. So, at a fixed hour each evening the bar was closed, the writing paper put away, and the hall cleaned out. Then began a bright, evangelistic meeting which was carried on every night of the week. And did the men grumble that they were having religion "rammed down their throats," as soldiers put it? Not at all. The meetings were as packed as was the tea room. Night after night these crowded meetings were held, and who shall tell where the influence of those gatherings will end?

Mr. Tervet, who had been sent out through Mrs. Todd Osborne, and who was working as an Army Scripture Reader, joined hands with our men. He has a very excellent spirit, and dove-

tailed into our methods very well. Being an old soldier, he was very helpful to our workers, especially at the first, as he knew the ropes well, and could tell our men when not to do certain things, as the men ought not to be spoken to, &c.

Nor did we confine the meetings to our own Mission. The Chaplains of the Church of England, the Presbyterians, and the Wesleyans were invited to take part, and even the Salvationists were asked to help, as they seemed rather out in the cold, and so we were glad to show them sympathy. Major Robertson, the Presbyterian Chaplain, was simply kindness itself to our workers, and his unwearying attention to the needs of his men was very marked. A very ungracious slur is often cast on Military Chaplains, as if they had a very easy time of it. All we can say is that if we may judge of them by the men we have met on active service, this slur is a very shameful and untruthful one.

We must pause here to mention the universal kindness of the officers of all ranks. It would be invidious to mention names, for to give a complete list we should have to record very many names. Their courtesy and goodwill was always to be safely reckoned on. For example, when our Home was first opened at Modder River



THE WYNBERG BASE HOSPITAL.

it was out of bounds for the Highland Brigade, owing to its distance from their camp. On consulting the officers, they at once arranged that all the men who wished to write letters should be drawn up in parade and marched down to the Home, thus instituting a new departure in the British Army of a letter-writing parade. An officer of the Highland Brigade used to spend much of his spare time at the Home, and called it "the most useful place at Modder River," and frequently said that, if it were only for the facilities of letter-writing, the boon was inestimable. Many of the Highlanders who fell at Magersfontein wrote home their last letters to wives or mothers in Scotland from our Home.

But to return for a moment to the meetings. It can well be imagined how the men's hearts are open to impressions at a time such as they had at Modder River. The very first news which met our men as they reached the place was that one of "our" Christian lads in the "Lancs." had been killed at Graspan. Mr. Darroll had been sitting with him only a few days before. The death of the Christian lad happened in this wise: During the engagement at Graspan a fellow soldier was wounded. This Christian soldier knelt down under a raking fire and calmly dressed

the wound of his companion. As he was doing this a Mauser bullet pierced his heart, and he died instantly. Scores of the men came to Mr. Darroll to say that when they saw his body they found a smile on his face, which struck them very much. As Mr. Darroll says when describing this event, "Behold the end of the upright, for the end of that man is peace." With such stories in the air, no wonder men are forced to think. The attention at the meetings was most marked. On Saturday night a testimony meeting used to be regularly held. Those who had "newly enlisted" in the ranks of the Prince of Peace would give their testimony with an honest ring which made all hearts rejoice. Nothing so wins people as to hear the unvarnished, unstudied, natural expression of delight in Christ's service. When a man rises before his comrades who know his life, and can fearlessly say that he finds Christ's service perfect freedom, he may do more good than many a long sermon; for unreality is soon found out in the barrack room, or in the camp on the veldt. Then others who had "been on the road" for some time would state how they found Christ to be a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother, and a Friend in time of need when trial or danger was at hand. Another would sing his testimony,

using such a hymn as "A little talk with Jesus makes it right," and would say how he was digging trenches all the day, and had just turned in for a rest, when he was called out for "fatigue" duty. Instead of getting irritable and swearing, as he would have done before he knew Christ as his Saviour, he experienced that a "little talk" with Christ puts all things right, and that he found himself going to his work with a song in his heart.

Another would jump up and speak about a "heliograph face," referring to the fact that a glad heart makes a glad face, and a sad heart makes a sad face. What a tell-tale the face is! Then, perhaps, a soldier would jump up, and everyone would wait breathlessly to hear what he had to say. Had he not been one of the worst characters in the regiment? And now he found that Christ had taken away his old evil desires, and he no longer *wanted the sins he once lived to indulge in.*

In case this might be thought to be mere sentiment which the realities of the battlefield would put to flight as the mists of morning vanish before the rising sun, it may be well to point out that this man mentioned last was afterwards found dying on the battlefield at Magersfontein,

and when he was offered a drink of water, he thanked the man who offered it, but pointed to a man close by who needed it badly, and told them to give it to the other man, as he had water to drink that they knew not of; and soon he passed into that land where they thirst no more, neither hunger any more, but where God shall lead them to living fountains of water and wipe away all tears from off all faces. How that man's testimony would live on in the memory of his companions! Would a dozen sermons or addresses make such a deep impression as the homely testimony of such a man?

In case these incidents offend anyone's sense of propriety, let us remember that to these men there is nothing unrefined in such expressions. They mean, and mean intensely, very real spiritual experiences; and who would not far rather have such experiences with the rough expression than be devoid of such deep things with all the propriety in the world? Of course things will be said that grate on our sense of what is fitting, but so long as such phrases are not empty cant, but possess in their content the expression of spiritual realities, let us welcome them. After all, it is the hollow and the empty phrase that is contemptible,

Truth may be clad in a rough garb, but it has a warm and kindly heart.

On Sunday, December 10th, a Parade Service was held in our Home by the Wesleyan Chaplain, who was a splendid man, and specially suited to work amongst soldiers. At that service, afternoon and evening meetings were announced, and both officers and men said that the place would be well filled. But there were other stirring scenes awaiting our workers, all unknown to them. Shortly afterwards an order was passed all round the camp that an advance was to be made against the enemy, and that a heavy engagement was imminent. In the incredibly short space of an hour or two the whole force was ready to march. This gigantic camp seemed to move as if it were a large, well-oiled piece of machinery. Our workers say it took their breath away to see how marvellously this movement was made. Hearing that the column was only going a short way, and that it would be easy to catch it up in a few hours, Mr. Huskisson decided to leave at about midnight with Mr. Tervet, while Mr. Darroll, who was not feeling very well for some days past, remained behind to take charge of the Home until another move might be necessary.

The troops moved out towards Magersfontein,

and the various regiments took up positions in the dark. When Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Tervet caught up the column they hardly knew what to do. The experience was completely new, and they did not know what they would be allowed to do, or could do even if allowed. Mr. Huskisson put a bold front on, as usual, and went right up to the spot where the Staff Officers were standing and watching the operations. Chatting with one of them—a Major—he asked if he would be allowed to go out to the firing line. The Major said to him, "Oh yes; you can go just where you like, and you will soon find out when you have gone too far," or, "the Boers will soon let you know when you have gone far enough." That was all he wanted, and so off he started to the firing line, accompanied by Mr. Tervet.

This was a novel situation indeed, and what could a Soldiers' Home man do during an actual battle? Without any preconceived plan, they just marched on over the veldt, chatting as they went, and taking their bearings. Suddenly, without any previous warning, they heard a strange sound, "Ping!" A man does not need to be told what that ominous sound means, and so they instinctively knew that a Mauser bullet had passed a few inches from them. At once they fell on

their faces to get out of sight, one falling down in one direction and one in another. Looking round, they saw some ant heaps, which, of course, abound in South Africa. They crawled behind one of these for cover, and were well out of sight. These ant heaps are a fair size, though nothing like those to be found in certain parts of Rhodesia, where I have seen a railway cutting made through the centre of such a heap.

Once under cover, they had time to think and take observations. For a whole hour they had to lie down at this spot, as the bullets from the Boer Mausers kept flying all around. Sometimes these bullets would strike the earth quite close to them and send up little puffs of dust, and then go ricochetting away over the veldt. Now, how could they do much Mission work, when the puffs of red dust showed them the bullets were often hitting the ground only a few inches away? The situation did not look very cheerful.

They noticed many men falling all around them, and so they thought the best thing to do was to crawl out to bind up their wounds, seeking, of course, to keep under cover as far as possible so as to run no needless risks. Then, having crawled to some wounded man, they would open his "First Dressing," and apply it in amateur

fashion, for if a man was wounded in the arm it could not be easy for him even to open his dressing, much less apply it.

Presently they saw a poor lad who had been wounded trying to crawl under cover, so they went out to him and took him under the best cover they could and bound up his wounds.

As they were lying under cover Mr. Huskisson saw a young Highlander lying behind an ant heap. And so, imagining that he was wounded, he crept out to him, and lay down alongside. It turned out that the Highlander was quite a lad, and, in the flurry of the first unexpected fire of the Boers, had lost touch with his regiment. He said he did not know what to do, as he did not even know in what direction his regiment was, and the moment he stood up he was greeted naturally with a shower of bullets. So he simply had to lie down and await developments. Here was a golden chance for a good talk, and as this lad and Mr. Huskisson lay behind the ant heap a long conversation followed, which very naturally drifted round to the subject of religion. While Mr. Huskisson was talking with him the lad suddenly burst into tears and promised to yield himself to God. Such an impression as that may of course wear off, or else it may deepen into a change of

life. Thus the way opened for very direct mission work of a personal nature.

Here is another case in point, which must serve as a sample of many other similar cases. A man was wounded in his shoulder, and as Mr. Huskisson was binding up his wound, the man naturally spoke about his very narrow escape. Chatting with the man, it was very simple to point out to him that as his life had been spared, he was under an extra obligation to yield his life up to God. In the face of the very significant facts he could hardly deny this, though possibly in times of peace he would not have cared to enter a Soldiers Home. In another case a man was wounded in the leg, and as Mr. Huskisson was binding up the wound and helping him back to the ambulance, she man said "You know, I am not a religious sort of chap, but I have just got one chum in the world, and that is a sister of mine: and I know the is praying hard for me." How a good mother's or sister's prayers follow a man all round the earth: it is hard to get away from the influence of such prayers!

As soon as the men had their wounds dressed, they were helped back to the rear where the ambulances were, and once the men were safely landed at the dressing station, Mr. Huskisson and

Mr. Tervet would return to the firing line to repeat their work. A large number of journeys were thus made as the men were helped back with their equipment and rifles. Of course some cases had to be left on the field, being too far gone to be brought back to the rear: it was not possible to do much for these except to give them water, and try to tend to their comfort as could best be done, and to speak words of comfort to them as they lay dying. The men suffered terribly from thirst, as they were lying down under a scorching sun all day, for the water in their bottles got quite hot from the heat, and did not last very long. Mr. Huskisson was helping a wounded man to get under cover when he heard another man, who was lying on his back, moaning. Thinking he was dangerously wounded, he told the first man to lie down for a few moments while he went to help the man who was in trouble. When he got near to him he heard the poor fellow moaning out, "Water! Water! Water!" Finding that the man was not wounded, but only fainting from exhaustion and lack of water, he raised his head on his arm and poured a little water down the man's throat, and this soon revived him. It was most piteous to see great, big, strapping Highlanders perfectly faint from lack of water. Going

back to the wounded man he had left, Mr. Huskisson dressed his wounds and helped him back to the rear, as usual carrying the rifle and equipment. Then, going to the Hospital Corps, he asked permission to take a water cart up to the men in the firing line. Owing to the danger of this proposal, there was some little difficulty at first about getting permission, but when he urged that surely he could take it as far as the ammunition carts, he got permission. So the cart was driven up to the front, and placed behind some bushes for protection. Then, taking all the cover he could, Mr. Huskisson went out to the Highlanders and told them that there was water at hand. A large crowd gathered round the cart and some of the men were too utterly exhausted to join in the crush to get their bottles filled: so these were taken for them and filled. Of course Mr. Tervet was helping in all these operations.

The casualties that day were very heavy, being reported at somewhere about a thousand. And all through the day unparalleled chances arose for direct spiritual work amongst the men. They started the subject of their own accord, and it needed no beating around the bush: they seemed to expect plain talking.

Once during the day, as they were lying behin

cover, they suddenly found the air alive with bullets ; a perfect hail of lead seemed to be rushing through the air over their heads. Wondering whatever could have drawn such a terrific fire, they glanced round and found the Gordons coming up. They were receiving the very warm attention of the Boers. The effect of the advance of these Gordon Highlanders was very strange at first. They advanced in open formation for about ten or twelve paces, and then all fell down flat to avoid the enemy's fire. After a few moments the whole number of men would suddenly rise up and rush forward about another dozen paces, and then fall flat, and so on.

Towards evening, when the fire had slackened, little clusters of Highlanders were standing about chatting, and Mr. Huskisson was standing in the midst, when suddenly the Boers unmasked a gun that had been hidden all the day. A shell came hissing and shrieking over their heads and fell about a hundred yards beyond them. A second quickly followed and burst quite close to a clump of Highlanders, covering them from head to foot with dust as it burst, but doing no damage. They at once opened out to minimize the danger.

All the day the medical staff were very busy, and it was most touching to see how very kind

INTERIOR OF OUR CAPE TOWN SOLDIERS' HOME HALL.

SOLDIERS WAITING TO GET IN OUR SOLDIERS' HOME, MODDER RIVER

they were to the wounded men, taking every possible care to prevent any pain. Their behaviour was beyond all praise.

At last this eventful day drew to a close, and it seemed as if years had been crowded into the twenty-four hours. This was the first taste our men had of an actual engagement, and it was so ghastly that they never want to see any more.

But what was Mr. Darroll doing all this time? He was at Modder River carrying on the Soldiers' Home, and had a very good meeting with the men remaining behind, even though they could hear the boom of the cannons, which seemed to shake the building.

After the battle of Magersfontein the work went on very successfully. The Home became a very popular resort for the men, and the meetings received a fresh touch from the fact that firing was kept up almost daily by the naval guns and the artillery, while the presence of Boer trenches at Magersfontein made the situation very realistic. As an officer said, "Life here on the veldt makes God seem very real, and the things of earth very small."

Christmas Day was a red-letter day. The Christian men call it "the Modder River Pentecost." To start with, the Home was crowded

all day, and many a man knew that his friends in the Old Country were praying for him. There was an indescribable hush over the meeting that night, and numbers of men professed to yield themselves to God as they heard the story of God's love to wayward men. How many a heart was bowed down in penitence as he took the well-known words on his lips, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son."

Mr. Darroll was obliged to return to Cape Town, being quite knocked up with the hard work, and soon afterwards Mr. Huskisson was temporarily ill from sheer over-work and poor food. But, fortunately, they conveniently got ill in turns, and so the Home was able to be kept going without any interruption. They were also helped in their work by two officers. Major Granville Smith, of the Coldstream Guards (well known as the Hon. Secretary of the Army and Navy Missionary Union), gave much help in the shape of Bible Readings, while Lieutenant Forster, R.E., was also continually with our men, and now and then helped in the services. Mr. Wheeler, of the S.C.A., also paid a visit to Modder River, and helped in some of the meetings.

The military authorities kindly granted us an

AT MODDER RIVER CAMP.

OUR SOLDIERS' HOME AT MODDER RIVER CAMP.

orderly who had also previously been granted to us at Wynberg in olden days, when his regiment was there. A fatigue party was also supplied from the Argyll and Sutherlands to help in cleaning up the Home daily. Frequently orderlies from the Hospital would come and ask for note paper for the wounded men, and this gave a good chance of enclosing some Christian literature in the packet. This was very helpful, as the time of our men was so much taken up with the Home that they had not as much time as they might have wished for the Hospital visiting. In addition to this, some of the officers would now and then send over their servants to ask for some paper when it was very scarce at Modder River.

Not long after Lord Methuen's visit to the Home, he very kindly arranged to get Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Darroll attached to the Bearer Company of the Highland Brigade, with the understanding that they were to be free to do their own work, and help the men as best they could. This kind action of Lord Methuen gave us increased facility in our work. The great difficulty of getting water for the Home was also solved, as the Officer Commanding the Royal Engineers gave permission for the Home to get its water from the Railway tank, which was close

by, and which was guarded by sentries. It was easy after this to make many bathfuls of lemonade every day.

Soon after being attached to the Highland Brigade, a change was made in the command of the Brigade, as General Hector Macdonald arrived to take command. Reviewing his Brigade, he reminded them that "That hill still lies ahead of the Highland Brigade," referring to the hill at Magersfontein : then he added that he wanted the Highlanders to be in the hottest corner that there was. So no wonder "that hill" meant a good deal to many of the men ; and when Mr. Tervet would say to some of the men as they gazed at it daily, "that hill means eternity to some of us," they would assent by a very suggestive expression of face. And, indeed, "that hill" loomed up large in many minds ; sometimes in the Testimony Meeting on Saturday nights the men would refer to it, and one Highland laddie said, "I am ready to fall at yon hill, if God wishes, or else I am willing to bide a wee longer here and live for Him." And these lads would show that they felt the way to serve God was not to hide in a small circle of spiritual sentimentality, but to set to unselfish work and serve their fellows ; after a night's guard, or a heavy fatigue duty, they would cheer-

fully take their turn in helping to dish out tea to the hundreds of men crowding round. And it needed some grace to keep good-humoured when so many men were pressing in to get helped. It is interesting to note that some of these men, who thus showed practical Christianity, were men who decided to forsake sin and live for God and others while working in the trenches.

It so happened that all the stores were giving out; the lime juice and lemon essence was finished; the biscuits were nearly done; the stock of tea was nearly used up, when suddenly one morning a message came that the military authorities were very sorry, but the Home was needed as a hospital for the enteric fever patients, as it was the only available brick building in the place. Of course, there was nothing to do but to submit cheerfully. Evidently this sphere of service was closing up: from one point of view our men were sorry, when they thought of all the good times they had experienced in this Home. Often their hearts would be cheered by men coming to them to say that they felt God had spoken to them in the meeting on the previous evening, and that they had surrendered to Him. This sort of thing made our workers sorry to close up the Home. But if the building was needed as a hospital, then a hospital

it ought to be. The military authorities promised as a substitute to lend us as many marquees as we wished, though these would have to be sent up from Cape Town. While waiting for these marquees the various commanding officers gladly gave our men liberty to hold open-air meetings amongst the different regiments, and so hundreds listened to the open-air preaching who would never have gone into a Soldiers' Home. Some of these meetings were immense, and the attention was very marked.

However, after a few days a move was made, and before any tents arrived from Cape Town the Modder River work was ended, for the Highland Brigade moved out to Koodoosberg Drift, while Mr. Huskisson was down at Cape Town getting seats and tables for the tents at Modder River.

Mr. Darroll went out with the brigade to which he was attached. Koodoosberg Drift is about 15 miles to the west of Modder River, and we had been rather afraid that Mr. Darroll could not stand a rough march, as he had not been well; but he fell in love with this rough veldt-life, and took very warmly to "bully beef" and biscuits. Good teeth are most important during a campaign. In this point Mr. Darroll had an advantage over Mr. Huskisson, who could not manage the hard

biscuits. A certain soldier broke his set of false teeth over the biscuits, and he was sent to the Medical Corps men. They said they could not repair the broken plates. Consequently he was sent to the blacksmith as being the nearest approach to a dentist in Modder River. The blacksmith had to refuse to try his hand on anything so delicate, and so the man had to be sent to Cape Town. Mr. Darroll found everyone in the Bearer Company extremely kind, and after a good long march Koodoosberg was reached.

On the day of the fight Mr. Darroll and Mr. Tervet started off early for the kopje, and spent the whole day there amongst the men. Once they got into a very hot corner, and the Mauser bullets and shrapnel were unpleasantly near. There was much they could do to help the men, and they felt very thankful to be on the spot. At one time the enemy's fire was so hot that many of our men were forced out of the trenches, leaving rifles and helmets behind them. As our men carry a private stock of bandages, Brand's meat lozenges, &c., they were able to make good use of them, in addition to giving pocket handkerchiefs to cover the men's heads from the scorching sun, when they were forced to leave their helmets behind in the trenches. Many a poor fellow who

was utterly exhausted managed to pull himself together after receiving some meat lozenges out of the small private stock which our men carried.

As the fight wore on, they were going about with a stretcher, when an officer shouted to them saying that there were three wounded men to the right. Off they went for a long distance, jumping over boulders, when they found two wounded men. One was able to walk, being wounded in the head, but the other was wounded in the foot and had to be carried. An officer lent them some men, and off they started down hill. It was a terrible and sorry business to take the poor wounded man over the boulders, with all the necessary jerking; but there was no path, and they had to do the best they could. They got this man to a hut, and then, after a short rest, he was taken to the ambulance. After seeing these two men safely landed with the ambulance, they started off in search of the third wounded man, but found that someone in the meantime had looked after him.

After this engagement the Brigade marched back to Modder River, doing most of the marching at night or in the early morning, so as to let the men rest during the hot part of the day. During this march Mr. Darroll had a novel experience.

LORD ROBERTS LANDING AT CAPE TOWN.

It was late at night and quite dark. The moon had just gone down, and the veldt was plunged into a deep darkness. As the whole body of men was marching along in the dark, a rushing noise was heard in front, as if a number of horsemen were suddenly attacking the column. In a moment the whole place was a mass of confusion, and many men narrowly escaped being crushed under the feet of the horses. The men swerved over to one side of the road, but it soon became evident that it was only a stampede of mules, which was fortunately stopped before the column was reached. The officers soon got their men into line again, and shortly afterwards a welcome sight appeared in the distance, for they were coming near to the camp fires which the advance party had made. After some coffee, all lay down amongst the mules and horses for a good sleep. Mr. Darroll was suddenly aroused in the very early morning by one of the mule boys, who had stolen some rum and who was very drunk. He wanted to fight the whole Brigade, as he felt so big from the effect of the rum. At last he was tied to a cart until he became reasonable.

The next afternoon, after a rest, they completed the march back to Modder River, where Mr. Huskisson greeted Mr. Darrol with a cup of cocoa,

as he had by this time returned from Cape Town with the benches and tables for the marquees. But before these marquees arrived all plans were changed, as the whole column was prepared to be on the move to the relief of Kimberley. How our men found themselves at Paardeberg and what they saw there must be reserved for a special chapter.

CHAPTER III.

PAARDEBERG, AND THE SURROUNDING OF CRONJE.

On the 12th February, notice was given that the Highland Brigade was to get ready for marching. No one seemed to know where they were going. All that was clear was that there was a large move on. It was impossible to find out any details as to where they were going, or how long they would be on the march. On the Sunday all was bustle in the camp, as different regiments were moving out in various directions, and everyone seemed busy for a complete change. No one was to be allowed to take more than a single pair of spare socks and an extra shirt. This was to be the extent of their kit for an unknown length of time. To old South African travellers who are accustomed to live for months on a single pair of saddle bags, this would not spell hardship; but it was a fairly rough breaking in for those who had not been used to such a limited kit. Mr. Huskisson

and Mr. Darroll now found themselves in new surroundings, as they were in a new Division, under a new General, with a new Provost Marshal, a new Medical Officer, and a new Chief Staff Officer. It was like beginning life again.

However, they managed to get permission to take a small box of food stuffs, into which they put a good supply of Brand's lozenges and other luxuries for the men. Amongst the most useful things, mention must be made of eau de Cologne and Haralene Snow. The former was very welcome to the wounded men, and the latter to the Highlanders, the backs of whose legs used to be exposed to the sun for hours, as they lay down in action. These poor fellows suffered very much from blisters under their knee joints, and would come to the Home for some ointment. Of course rugs were taken by the transport, but eight of the ten ambulance wagons were needed elsewhere, and so the available room in this direction was very limited.

At about five o'clock on Monday afternoon the Highland Brigade entrained in open trucks, which were shared by officers and men alike. All the information they could get was that they were to go south to some unknown spot, and then start on a long march. After a few hours in the train,

they stopped at Enslin at eleven o'clock at night, and all had to get out and sleep on the veldt. This again is an experience well known to old travellers in South Africa; and the sensation of lying on the ground, snugly tucked up in a blanket, and gazing up at the twinkling stars, which seem to shine like clusters of gems in the deep, dark, blue sky above, is a sensation to be understood only by actual experience.

In the Free State, the men were saved one interesting aspect of such a life which adds spice to it in the fever districts. I mean, there is no fear of your waking up to find a huge snake coiling itself round your arm, or trying to get into your blanket; nor are your dreams in the Free State scared by visions of tigers and lions.

At four in the morning the whole camp was astir and alive, and by half-past seven the entire force was on its march to a small place called Ramsdam, which was supposed to be about fifteen miles off.

A march with some thirty-five thousand men is not a common experience, and in such hot, dusty weather it had its unpleasant aspects. Many of the chief marches were made, either in the very early morning, or else on the moonlit nights, when it was deliciously cool. But during the day

the heat was very oppressive, and the men suffered much from thirst, as even the water in their bottles got quite hot in the sun. But sometimes forced marches had to be made, and distances from fifteen to thirty-eight miles were covered in the twenty-four hours. Often great, strong, strapping men would fall down utterly exhausted, and our men would give such cases some cool water which they carried for the purpose and which restored them as if by magic. Sometimes even the officers would come and ask for a little cool water. Thus, even on the march, when one can do less for the men than at any other time, there were chances of doing good. In addition to this, a few chatty, cherry words marvellously helped the stragglers to pull themselves together, and Brand's meat lozenges would complete the cure.

Unfortunately the enemy captured the convoy of some 200 wagons, and so everyone was put on quarter rations, which meant a biscuit and a half each day, and half a tin of "Bully Beef." Owing to this, and also owing to the heat and fatigue, many men fell out on the march, and had to be taken up into the ambulance wagons. When these were full up, the men had to be placed on the transport wagons, and others had to hold on to the wagons and drag themselves on as best they

could, when the transport wagons were full up.

After the second day's march a halt was allowed close to Jacobsdal, where the men obtained some welcome shelter amongst the trees. But the enjoyment was partly spoiled by the uncertainty as to when they would have to move on again. Still our workers had some very happy prayer meetings with the men under the shade of the trees.

On going to bed, that is to say, on lying down on the open veldt for the night, everyone was just looking forward to a good night's rest, when an alarm was sounded and everyone had to pack up blankets and get ready for marching. To show the kindness and thoughtfulness of the officers, we may state that the Captain of the Company to which our workers were attached did not see our men ready to start. Thinking that they might possibly be down by the river and so might get left behind, he went down there to make sure where they were.

Soon after this, they heard the Sergeant-Major tell the men to be careful with their water-bottles, as they had a very long march before them. After they had got some distance on their march they encountered a swarm of locusts, which had settled

on the ground for the night, and it was weary work wading through them. A swarm of locusts is a sight worth seeing. The whole sky is often darkened by the swarm for fully half an hour, as the swarm passes overhead. If a train encounters a swarm, it is often stopped, as the rails become so slippery with the crushed locusts that the engine is rendered useless. At eight in the morning a halt was made under a burning sun, and some of the men made a sort of bivouac under rugs, while others threw themselves exhausted on the ground. The news soon came that at five in the afternoon they would have to start on another twenty-mile march; and now the mounted men were the centre of much envy. The men fell out in large numbers, and ambulances and wagons were full up with fainting men.

At about two in the early morning the column arrived at what turned out to be the memorable Paardeberg. The enemy were face to face with our troops, who, tired after their thirty-eight mile march and exhausted from lack of food and sleep, sank down on the ground in one confused mass, including officers and men, no one even having a blanket.

After two or three hours, the firing of the artillery aroused everyone, and then the fighting

THE HOSPITAL DRESSING STATION AT PAARDEBERG
WOUNDED MEN IN FOREGROUND.

THE BAKERY IN THE FIELD.

began, without the men having any chance of having breakfast. In this tired and hungry state the men had to fight during the heat of the day, though, fortunately, a thunderstorm cooled the air in the afternoon.

And now, once more, our workers were plunged into the gruesome sights of war. Mr. Huskisson went in one direction, and Mr. Darroll and Mr. Tervet went in another. It so turned out that Mr. Darroll got into a very hot corner, and could hardly move a foot even without drawing a heavy rifle fire all round him. He had to lie down most of the day behind an ant heap, while the broiling sun half baked him. The smallest attempt to move was answered by a hail of lead.

Mr. Huskisson got well into the firing line, and men were falling all round him, and he had many chances of binding up wounds and helping men back to the dressing station. The men seemed perfectly willing to listen to very straight talking about eternal things, and soft speeches seemed out of place while they were in the very jaws of death. Many poor fellows would have bled to death had not their wounds been bandaged up that day. In most battles the actual numbers killed would probably be considerably lessened if only

was all right, and able to leave the hospital! Constantly as they walked about the streets soldiers would stop them and remind them that they had been in our Soldiers' Home at Cape Town in olden days before the war. The short rations during the siege had made many of them so thin that it was hard to recognize them again. One lad said that he had kept a sort of diary, and showed the page where he had entered up: "Had my first frog to-day; it is very like partridge."

One of their old Christian men had been killed during the siege, and many of the soldiers testified as to how peacefully he had died on the battlefield.

Some stay was made at Kimberley, and we were able to give some little help to the S.C.A. which had a tent there. Later on the S.C.A. left Kimberley and took down their tent, and at the request of the Military we put up one of our Mission tents, which was placed in the charge of two of our lady workers, Miss McCarthy and Miss Mutimer, while Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Darroll went across country to Bloemfontein, having a most exciting time on the road which will be described next. The work at Kimberley soon increased and our two lady workers are thus starting a work which will form the basis, we trust, of our permanent work at that place.

inches from cover of the tree, and he heard a "ping" as the bullet struck the earth a few inches away from his foot, sending up a puff of dust where it struck the earth.

From this very uneviable position and warm corner, Mr. Huskisson saw one of our soldiers wounded some little distance off. To get to him he saw he would have to cross an open space, and that while he was crossing this open ground the Boer would be able to empty the magazine of his Mauser rifle at him with its five cartridges. He felt he ought to risk it and go and bring this wounded man behind cover: so he made a rush for it, and distinctly counted the five bullets passing perilously close to him. But he crossed this hot zone in safety, and attended to the wounded man, and took him under cover. And surely he felt that it was well worth running the gauntlet of those five Mauser bullets to rescue this wounded man!

In the afternoon they witnessed a charge for the first time in their lives. The scene was too awful to fully describe. When the order was given to charge, and the bugle rang out over the battlefield, the whole body of men immediately leaped forward with a wild yell, and dashed for the enemy's trenches. They were met with a withering fire,

which mowed down scores of men. The sound of this terrific storm of bullets, together with the rattle of musketry, was indescribably dreadful. It seemed as if nothing could live in the face of such a hail of lead ; instinctively all onlookers held their breath, as they witnessed this magnificent charge. In a few moments the position was won, though it does not seem to have been strategically worth the loss of life. Mr. Darroll has said that he always thought British soldiers brave men, but that he was amazed at their marvellous bravery.

Facing eternity ? Yes, indeed. And what was it that yonder Christian soldier is saying to the officer beside him ? " It is a good thing, sir, at a time like this, to know that you are safe in God's keeping " The officer did not catch his meaning, and so the lad repeated his testimony of confidence in God. The officer just answered " Yes," when he fell, badly wounded, and a moment afterwards the soldier on the other side of the Christian lad was shot down. Our workers knew this lad personally, and feel that such a case amply rewards them for any labour spent on the Soldiers' Homes.

Here is another instance of the result of our Soldiers' Home at Wynberg. As Mr. Huskisson was helping a wounded man away to the dressing-station, he heard his own name called out, and

SOLDIERS' HOME TENT No. 2, BASE HOSPITAL, WYNBERG.

looking around saw one of "our" boys who had been blessed at the Wynberg Home. Going up to him he asked if he were badly wounded, and received the chirpy answer, "Yes, sir, but thank God it is not in my head." It turned out that a bullet had gone right through the back of his neck, and he was humming a Soldiers' Home chorus to himself in spite of his profuse bleeding. Not long after this a Major came up to Mr. Huskisson and said, "Do you know that fellow?" "Oh, yes," said Mr. Huskisson, "He is one of our Soldiers' Home boys." Then the Major answered, "I declare he is the most chirpy man that has come into the dressing-station during the whole day; he was brought in here singing a hymn." And when Mr. Huskisson left him he was still humming choruses to himself. Even a godless man was heard to say about this man, "A chap coming in like that to the dressing-station does more good than anything, for he keeps up the fellows' spirits so well." Mr. Darroll met this man later on, and the wounded Christian said, cheerily, "My heavenly Father wants me to have a holiday, I suppose, and so He is sending me to the hospital." Then he offered Mr. Darroll a biscuit, which he declined, hungry as he was, for he did not want to rob the man of his food. He was devoutly thank-

ful that he did refuse it, for afterwards he found out that this was the only biscuit the wounded man had for the whole day.

It seems that even this field hospital was within range of the Mauser bullets. And in the Bearer Company's dressing-station things were somewhat lively, as a bullet fell right into the pot in which water was being boiled to make Bovril for the wounded men.

There were so many sad sights that our workers felt as if war could not be justifiable on any conditions. A Highlander was lying wounded, and evidently dying. On being asked if he knew Christ as his Saviour, he made no answer, so the question was repeated. Then the dying man said, "I did once, sir." He had evidently grown cold towards God, and it was such a privilege to Mr. Huskisson to point out to him that, though his feeling towards God might have changed, still God's feeling towards him had not.

On another occasion a poor fellow was badly wounded, and, as he was being helped back to the rear, he had to walk fully a mile and a half. The conversation on the way turned on to the subject of his narrow escape, and he owned that he was under a strong obligation to yield himself to God. Then they stopped for a moment while the man

WOUNDED MEN AT WYNBERG FALLING IN TO RETURN TO THE FRONT AGAIN.

IN THE HOSPITAL GROUNDS, WYNBERG.

so quietly and simply handed over his life into God's hands, determining to henceforth live for Him.

When this sad day was drawing to a close, but before the firing was all over, these three Christian workers got behind some rocks and had a time of prayer together, and then they returned to camp—open veldt as it was—to turn in for the night; glad indeed they were that they had been able to render some little assistance to their fellows in their dark hour. So, worn out with the long thirty-eight mile walk and with the heavy day's work on the top of it, they lay down to sleep, safe under the shadow of the Almighty.

And we all saw in the papers that a very successful day had been spent, and that the British forces had hemmed Cronje in and forced him up the river bed; but how little we thought of all these scenes of anguish and bloodshed. And as we went to sleep that night, how little we thought that as the darkness settled down upon the battlefield, and the weary soldiers sank into a heavy slumber, that the silence of the night was only broken by the moans of many a poor wounded man who could not be brought in off the battlefield till the morning light. Oh, the weary nights after a day of battle! How they

haunt the imagination of the soldiers at times! Have you ever tried to imagine the sufferings endured throughout the weary hours of darkness and agony? Think how the dreary hours passed by as they lay there gazing up at the cold, silent stars, which sent back no answer to their groanings; think how the poor fellows were burning with fever, and there was no one to give them a cup of water in their delirium; think how many a lad sank back into the icy arms of death, too utterly wearied out to wish to live any longer; and then you may form some dim idea as to what war means.

But the hideous, ghastly night wore on, and at last the first streaks of dawn crept over the sky. What a sight met the all-loving eye of God! What a good thing it is that the mothers and sisters in England could not see the sights that met the eye of our workers that morning. Here on one side lay a number of dead Boers, clad in rough corduroy clothing; and yesterday they were our enemies. Now death has snatched them from the war, and they are buried by our men with as much care as if they were their own brothers. There on the other side lay many a soldier of the Queen, with his khaki all blood-stained.

A visit was paid to the scene of the charge of the day before, and a gruesome sight was seen. One man was found with no less than thirty bullet wounds; and in one place, our workers, who helped to identify the dead, found seventeen dead men lying in a heap. There was one strange sight at this spot. A young Christian lad lay dead. After being mortally wounded, he had evidently turned over on his side, and had taken a booklet out of his pocket to read. It bore the title, "The Fulness of the Holy Spirit." On making inquiries, our workers found out that this poor lad was known as "the best Christian in the regiment." And the closing moments of his life was spent amid all the din of battle, in pondering over the subject of a Spirit-filled life. What an object lesson!

At another spot they found a dead body by the side of the river, and could find no trace of his identification ticket, so they examined his pockets and found a letter from his mother. As they looked at the end of the letter to find the name, their eyes caught the words, "Your fond mother." They took the name and address, and then wrote home to the mother to tell her all they could find out about her boy. Oh, if the mothers could have seen one grave, where no less than fifty-five

Highlanders were buried, what heart-aches there would have been! While these men were lying cold in death, there were many warm hearts eagerly waiting to see the casualty list; longing to know that their boys were safe. How many a fatherless boy will now never know a father's love on earth, and how many a wife will have her house left unto her desolate. And this is war. How terrible must the long drawn out agony of many a Dutch mother or wife be, as she waits, week after week, to know the fate of her loved one. We are apt to forget this, not knowing what very tender and affectionate natures the Dutch have. If they love, they love strongly; and if they hate, they hate fiercely.

The kindness of the soldiers to their wounded comrades is a bright spot in this dark story. One poor fellow was found with five wounds, and it almost seemed cruel to our workers to move him; but a number of his comrades came up and lifted him with such tender care that they could not have treated a brother better. They carried him with marvellous skill which sprang from kind hearts, and avoided the slightest jar that might cause pain.

Again, the kindness of the Medical Corps was very marked, and a certain French Canadian

Doctor was most conspicuous for his tenderness. It is quite impossible to describe Major Robertson's keen attention to the men of the Highland Brigade. Everything that love could do, this indefatigable Chaplain did.

The weeks wore on without anything very memorable, except the terrific cannonading of Cronje, when some ninety or a hundred guns were simultaneously pouring death into his ranks. This furious cannonade seemed to have literally shaken the very earth.

Several nights were wet, and this made life very uncomfortable as there were no tents to be had. All that could be done for the men during this week was to visit the various camps, as I suppose they must be called for the want of a better word. It was rumoured that the Highland Brigade was probably to move to Kimberley, and so Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Darroll thought they had better try and get there in front of the men. They were also quite knocked up with insufficient food, and exposure. So on a Saturday afternoon they started off to trudge into Kimberley, which was about thirty miles away. They had to take their risk of being caught by any marauding parties of Boers, though they heard the country was supposed to be fairly free from the enemy.

They made a start at two o'clock on Saturday afternoon, and after walking along slowly till seven at night, they lay down on the open veldt exhausted. A heavy thunderstorm had been threatening for some hours, and now it came down in torrents. The thunder and lightning were very fierce, and soon they were drenched to the skin, and their boots were filled with water. They had tried to keep the fury of the storm off by holding a rug over their heads, but this did not do much good.

At times the scene seemed comical and ludicrous in spite of the miserable, half-drowned condition they were in. They had to burst into laughter now and then at the very grotesqueness of the scene. Soaked as they were to the skin, they said to one another, "We never seemed to be so fond of one another before, did we, old chap?" For they were almost hugging one another under the rug, to keep dry.

Presently they began to think that it was no use standing like that in the rain, and so they decided to push on in the dark. They tried to drag their weary footsteps along, and somehow or other the night wore away. At eight o'clock in the morning they found themselves near a deserted and looted house, and so they turned in to try and

GENERAL VIEW OF A JOHANNESBERG MINE.

THE BUTCHER'S SHOP ON THE MARCH TO PAARDEBERG.

find a few pieces of dry wood with which to make a fire. They boiled some water in an old tin, and made some Bovril. Cheered up thus, they resumed their march till about mid-day, when they came to another ruined house. They felt inclined to lie down and give in, but Mr. Huskisson went and climbed a kopje close at hand, and to his delight Kimberley seemed to be close at hand. Up they started and made in the direction of Kimberley. They had to follow the tracks of wagons as their only guide, and after about three more hours of slow trudging they entered Kimberley.

Of course the very first man they met had known them in the olden days at our Soldiers' Home at Cape Town, and so they felt at home at once. They then discovered that the people of Kimberley were still on rations, but they found many of their old Modder River men from whom they had parted a few weeks before. They also found their old friends in the Loyal North Lancs. who had been at Cape Town in olden days, and who had been shut up in Kimberley during the siege. One of the Christian lads of this regiment was in the hospital with fever, and was very fond of Mr. Darroll. As soon as he heard that Mr. Darroll was at Kimberley he told the doctor he

was all right, and able to leave the hospital! Constantly as they walked about the streets soldiers would stop them and remind them that they had been in our Soldiers' Home at Cape Town in olden days before the war. The short rations during the siege had made many of them so thin that it was hard to recognize them again. One lad said that he had kept a sort of diary, and showed the page where he had entered up: "Had my first frog to-day; it is very like partridge."

One of their old Christian men had been killed during the siege, and many of the soldiers testified as to how peacefully he had died on the battlefield.

Some stay was made at Kimberley, and we were able to give some little help to the S.C.A. which had a tent there. Later on the S.C.A. left Kimberley and took down their tent, and at the request of the Military we put up one of our Mission tents, which was placed in the charge of two of our lady workers, Miss McCarthy and Miss Mutimer, while Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Darroll went across country to Bloemfontein, having a most exciting time on the road which will be described next. The work at Kimberley soon increased and our two lady workers are thus starting a work which will form the basis, we trust, of our permanent work at that place.

CHAPTER IV.

KIMBERLEY TO BLOEMFONTEIN.

During the days spent at Kimberley, when our workers were resting, the troops had moved on to Bloemfontein with but little opposition. Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Darroll then made plans to catch up their Brigade, and for that purpose bought a cart and four horses at Kimberley. However, the road between Kimberley and Bloemfontein was not open, as parties of marauding Boers were known to be scouring the country and the telegraph wires were cut. After waiting for many days to get permission to travel along this route, and after waiting in vain, they thought the best thing to do was to try and get as far as they could, and then await developments. It was of course possible to have come down by train to De Aar, and gone on thence down to Norval's Pont, and so up through Springfontein to Bloemfontein, and in fact the Military authorities offered to give passes for this: but our

workers felt that this route was not workable, though several newspaper correspondents seemed to get so tired of waiting in idleness at Kimberley that they tried this route, only to be stopped before they got to Norval's Pont and sent back to Kimberley.

The best road from Kimberley to Bloemfontein passes through a little village called Boshof, and so they asked for passes to go to Boshof, in which place there was a British force. Permission was at once granted, and they decided to start away at once. The cart was loaded up with all sorts of materials, and then the horses were inspanned. Just as a start was to be made, a bolt broke; the horses had to be taken out, and the cart placed in the hands of a blacksmith. He said he could not finish the repairs till the next morning. So it was decided to make a very early start. But during the night one of the horses had been badly kicked, and seemed very stiff. Not having had experience with horses, our workers thought the best thing to do was to consult some friend who understood them. He said that the stiffness would probably wear off as they got on their journey. So they decided to make a start, and do the best they could. They reduced the luggage by some 400lb., so as to lighten the cart, and

drove out of Kimberley along the Boshof road. The lame horse did not improve as had been prophesied, but, rather, grew worse; and, to add to the situation, another of the horses was taken very ill. The road was naturally bad, as so much heavy traffic had been passing over it, and so there was nothing to do but to outspan for some hours in the veldt. As this only seemed to make the lame horse still more stiff, they thought that the best thing to do was to push on before the horses got worse.

After going on some little distance, it seemed cruel to expect the lame horse to pull any more, so it was taken out of the harness, and they tried in vain to get it to walk after the cart. There was nothing else to be done but to leave this horse in the veldt to take its chance; for as soon as they got to Boshof they could send back for it, unless it had been stolen in the meantime. Pushing on with the other horses, they could not get to Boshof before nightfall, and therefore had to outspan for the night. Next morning an early start was made, for Boshof was still some dozen miles ahead; but the horses were so bad that they had to outspan for three hours on the way.

Arriving at Boshof, they found an old friend in the person of Mr. Bosman, who was the Dutch

Reformed Minister of the place, but who had been for some years in Cape Town. He was very kind, and did all he could to help them, and seemed glad to get news of the outer world, as of course the posts were not running. A large schoolroom was placed at the disposal of Mr. Huskisson, which made a splendid temporary home for the soldiers. As the luggage in the cart included a good supply of note paper and envelopes, this was placed at the disposal of the men, free of charge. A service was arranged for in the evening, and candles were placed all round the building and on the window seats. The Colonel in command very kindly placed a notice in "Orders" without being asked, and did all he could to make the work a success. When the time came for the meeting, the building was packed with an eager audience, and a very profitable meeting was held.

Boshof had been reached on the Thursday, and the first service was held in the school building that night, and it is striking, that though "Orders" only came out at 6 p.m., yet, an hour later, the hall was packed for the meeting. A special despatch rider was to be sent into Kimberley to take the letters which the men wrote in the building the day after the meeting, and the

Colonel did everything he could to help our men. A second service was held on the Friday evening, and on Saturday, Mr. Huskisson and Darroll decided to run the gauntlet and make for Bloemfontein, taking their chance of being caught by the Boers. Before they started they found a poor soldier lad who was ill, but who could not get any suitable food, so they went to their cart—which seems to be something like the marvellous receptacles we read of in fairy stories, which contain everything a man can want—and got out some Bovril which they made for the sick man, much to his delight.

When asking the Colonel if they could go on to Bloemfontein, he said that there was a party of five hundred Boers on the road, and so it would be very risky to think of going on. These Boers were supposed to be only a mile or two away from Boshof. He suggested that if our workers did go on, that they should take revolvers and a white flag with them for protection. However, as they had protection that the world knows not, they thanked him for his advice, but did not feel free to accept the revolvers. He then very kindly said he would try and get them a letter from the late Landrost of the place, for this would help them more than anything he could

give them. The only difficulty was that this late Landrost might think our men were British spies and refuse to give the letter. But Mr. Bosman undertook to put that matter right, if any difficulty arose. At Boshof they managed to make an exchange with some of their horses and secured a splendid pair, which were known all over the country as good horses. They proved a very good bargain, for they went all the ninety miles into Bloemfontein without a single touch of the whip, and this in spite of the badness of the road.

And now commenced a most exciting journey. Having spanned in the horses, the cart passed briskly through the streets and came to the place where the sentries were. It was feared that there might be trouble here, for, of course, our men had no permits. But the sentries merely saluted them, and the cart and horses dashed on to the veldt, where they were soon far away from civilization. Naturally, they were all eyes and ears to catch the first sign of the approaching Boers, and the native driver kept on telling them the most blood-curdling tales about the Boers, and every now and then would say, "What is that over there in the distance? I believe they are Boers, Master." Then he would add in an

undertone, "They will lie low till we get quite near them, and then all of a sudden they will fire on us." This was not very cheering, but for a long time there were no signs of Boers to be seen.

After driving on for about two hours they came up to large flocks of sheep and droves of cattle, and knew they were therefore near this Boer commando which the Colonel had told them of.

The road here passed close to a house, and so Mr. Huskisson said to the driver that he would jump down and go and make friends with the Dutchman, through the medium of very imperfect Dutch. The driver remonstrated and declared they would be stopped and their horses taken if he did this, but before the driver knew where he was, Mr. Huskisson had jumped down and was walking up to the stoep of the house. He found a typical Boer family in possession. There were two old men—too old to fight—and several women, while there were some younger lads looking after the cattle. The old "Baas," as he is called, was smoking on the stoep, but went out to meet Mr. Huskisson, and seemed very much frightened. This somewhat reassured Mr. Huskisson. He then asked for permission to outspan on the farm, but the Boer evidently thought

that our workers were spies, so he added that the house was full, as some of the Boers from the commando came in every evening to sleep in the house. He then added that there was a farm some little way on where they could stop. Seeing he evidently did not want to have them on his farm they drove on and came to a farm where the owner had only returned from fighting a day or two previously. He found his whole house ruined and destroyed, chiefly by the Transvaalers, who seemed very bitter against the Free Staters. The doors were all broken to pieces and the house was stripped of everything. He gladly let them outspan for the night, and gave them what accommodation he could. When they sat down to the evening meal there was merely a piece of dry bread and a chunk of meat which each had to cut up with his own pocket knife. This man was once a rich man, but now he piteously spoke about the cruelty of being left penniless in his old age, with nothing but his land to fall back upon.

This old Dutchman gave our workers some very sad sidelights on the war, as seen on the Boer side. The bitterness of the Transvaalers against the Free Staters is no legend: it is too terribly true. Farm after farm in the Free State has been ruined and ransacked by the Trans-

vaalers. This Dutchman's wife was looking very haggard and thin, and it was easy to read in her sad face the history of her sorrows. All seemed to have been fairly well with them on this farm until Kimberley was relieved. As the Boers fled in precipitate flight from Kimberley they swept over the country and passed this farm saying, "Quick! quick! the English are coming, and they are killing all the women and children as they go." With such dastardly tales as these they fed the flames of race-hatred and bitterness, and caused the women to rush out anywhere into the veldt to escape these supposed British butchers of women and children. The poor Dutch woman on this farm fled when she heard this wicked cry, taking her children with her, and ran she knew not where. Fortunately her husband found her some thirty miles away from the farm, though she was more dead than alive. As soon as he saw Lord Robert's proclamation, he returned to his farm, having given up arms. These simple Dutch people entertained Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Darroll with great kindness, and made them as comfortable as they could under the circumstances. It is striking to note that they blame President Steyn very bitterly for dragging the Free State into this war, for which they had no heart.

Leaving this farm, Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Darroll drove on for some two and a half hours, expecting every moment to meet the Boers, and finally reached a house where the owners had been back from the fight for three days. As their horses had been stolen they could get no food, all they could do was to boil some water, while our men produced some tea. Then feeling pity for this old solitary, poverty-stricken couple, they gave them some tinned meat. It was very touching to see their gratitude, for they only had a little Boer meal and some coffee with which to keep themselves and three children alive. The simple-minded country Boers have been so deceived about the English, and lies have been so cunningly instilled into their minds as to the barbarity of the English, that the smallest act of kindness seems to produce a very great sense of wonder. A friend of mine, who was with the relief force on its way to Ladysmith, was attending to the wounded in the trenches of the Boers near Ladysmith. He found a young Dutch girl mortally wounded, lying in the Boers' trenches, and so he went up to her and placed her head on his arm to relieve her pain. Then he gave her a little hot coffee, which she drank very eagerly. Looking up into the face of this ministering angel, she said with

incredulity, "But you are not an Englishman?' When he assured her that he was, she went on to say that she had been taught to believe that the English were all unutterably cruel, and that she could not believe him. Shortly after this she died, but to the end refused to believe that any Englishman could be so kind. This is but one of a score of similar cases that have been told me by Christian workers.

Are these cases mentioned to stir up race feeling? Quite the reverse. There is no reason why the English and Dutch should not live together in harmony; no unavoidable fate hangs over our heads. But there are two things which are essential to a true spirit of brotherhood between English and Dutch. The ministers of the Gospel and the mothers of the two nations must work for peace.

To the religious teachers, we look for light to be thrown on the fact that the universal brotherhood of man ranks before the brotherhood of nationality. That is a depraved patriotism which tends to bitterness of racial feeling. It is no doubt a good thing that men should be lifted out of their own narrow constructed self by the interests of the family "self"; it is a good thing for men to be drawn above mere selfish family in-

terests by the claims of the larger and extended self which we call society. It is well to rise out of the narrowness of society into the claims of nationality. It is the highest life, however, to rise above nationality and to merge our interests in those of the great universal self of humanity. If we stop short of this final stage, our blessing becomes tainted, and we get family rivalries, social caste, and bitter patriotism.

It is a high ideal that lies before us, and we must look to the religious teachers of both the English and the Dutch to point us out our duty and to set us a true example. As a body they can hardly be said to have commenced training up to such a lofty ideal. He who teaches us to say "Our Father" will never open to us the deep and hidden mysteries of the words, unless he proceeds to show us how to say "Our Brothers." A gloomy Ichabod is written over a nation's history when its religious teachers fan the flames of hatred and strife.

Again, it is to the mothers we must also look. The formative forces of a nation's life issue forth from the nursery. Here lie the four points of character. The gloomiest aspect of the war lies here: the women are more bitter than the men. Would that the mothers could see that

there is no real advantage to their children in feeding the spirit of revenge. If the milk of human kindness turns to gall, the children suckled on their breasts will possess an acrid spirit. But the force of gentleness is invincible.

It is but natural that, when the isolated Boer lives without the advantages of books and magazines, his person should become contracted. For several years he has had little else to think of but "that dreadful Englishman over there." He has practically no intellectual pursuits with which to occupy his mind, and so he naturally reverts to the one unfailing topic of conversation, the designs of Mr. Rhodes and the English Government.

The English have a thousand other interests to absorb their thoughts, and this largely accounts for the fact that the bitterest race-hatred is on the side of the Boers. A false deduction is made from this fact. It is supposed by those who only know the Boers from newspaper reports, that they are devoid of kindliness of heart. The mistake is enormous. It would be hard to find a people more kindly and emotional than the Dutch Colonials. Those who have lived amongst them on their farms are all of one mind on this point, and the one danger in mission work amongst

them springs from their emotional nature. Our English workers would all gladly admit that they have found the Dutch to be more generous and friendly than the English—were that possible, and this leads me to trust that the present wave of bitterness is but a passing thing. If any wrong thing can ever be excusable, possibly this claims the most indulgence.

It is hard for those not living amongst the Dutch to realize this. The Pretoria oligarchy is mistaken for the united voice of the Dutch race. Unless we distinguish between the average Boer and the Pretoria clique, we shall do the Boers an injustice.

Semper eadem may be said of the corrupt Pretoria Government as truly as of Rome. There seems a fatality about the public life of the Dutch in South Africa, by which the worst elements to be found amongst the Boers rise to the surface and take possession of the Government positions. When in 1876 the French missionaries were cruelly imprisoned by the Boers at Pretoria and refused permission to settle north of the Limpopo River, they experienced the true character of the Pretoria officials. They were fined £14, costs, and ordered to leave the country instantly on pain of confiscation of their goods and imprisonment of their

persons. Mons. Coillard, who relates this in his book on Central Africa, adds: "It is only fair to say that many of the Transvaal burghers expressed their sympathy with the young missionary and his companion; and, indeed, the kindness shown to the subsequent expeditions by all the Boers they met sufficiently proves that this treatment was only the work of a small political clique hostile to foreign missions." And this, twenty years ago!

Semper eadem! The bad elements of Boer life take the Government places; the good elements seem to be powerless to leaven the Government circles. Hence we conclude that, as a race, they are not fit to rule, for there is ever a political clique devoid of high principle which usurps the control. Corruption and oppression have stained every page of their history in South Africa, and this has led to the idea that these evil traits are characteristic of all the Dutch. The Pretoria oligarchy is representative of chiefly the bad elements of Dutch life—not the best, or even the average. A failure to understand this will inevitably lead to unfair judgment.

If more evidence were required, it could be easily furnished. Mons. Berthoud himself told me the story of the shameful way in which the

Pretoria Government treated him and his companion, keeping them prisoners for some weeks; but if we conclude from this that *all* Dutch people are opposed to missionary work, we shall be mistaken. The great majority of those who know the Dutch intimately love them, but loathe their corrupt Government.

As this is so, we may confidently expect that in time the bitter race-hatred which is brooding over the country like a pestilential fog will vanish, if only the cherished dream of a Dutch South Africa under the rule of a Boer oligarchy, who shall have a free hand to make their liberty synonymous with the treading down the interests of Uitlanders, be completely shattered and dispelled at the close of the war.

It is to be feared that when the Pretoria Government say they are fighting for their liberty, that they have failed to grasp the true meaning of that sacred word. It is for licence they are striving, for they seem to have in their minds a false freedom based on the power to do as they list, and to oppress the Uitlander by denying him the enjoyment of his rights. Under the British flag the word freedom does not include the thought of such an outrage on civilized government.

But to return to our story. Leaving this farm,

where the old Dutch couple did so much to make our workers feel at home, they drove on for a couple of hours and reached the Modder River, where they had to cross it at a bad spruit. They expected difficulty here, but the two new horses did admirably, and took the cart through without difficulty. They soon came to a farm where there lived an old couple with a number of daughters, and two or three sons. As they had remained on their farm no damage had been done to it, and it was here that Lord Roberts had breakfast on his way into Bloemfontein. The old couple insisted on Mr. Huskisson's sitting in the seat that Lord Roberts had used. The sons had been in the Boer trenches at Magersfontein, and it was most interesting to hear their story of the war. The old mother said that her father had been a German missionary.

After thus being courteously entertained, they spanned in the horses and drove on till they came to a splendid farm, where the Dutch owner received them most kindly. The old man was excused from fighting because four of his sons were with the Boer forces. He was compelled, however, to pay a large sum of money and to provide a stock of cattle. One of the sons had been killed in the war, and the family was in mourning. The other

sons had laid down their arms and had returned to the farm. President Kruger and President Steyn had stopped for a short time at this farm as they hurriedly fled from Lord Roberts' advancing force, and from this house President Kruger addressed his Burghers, pathetically begging them not to flee, but to stop Lord Roberts. Two young men brought up their rifles to President Kruger saying "We can't. You go and do it." He said, "If I were younger I would."

During the evening meal all was quiet and peaceable till one of the sons came into the room with his wife leaning in a fainting condition on his arm. They had walked through the river to escape from the Boers, who were surrounding the farm which was a short distance off. He put his hand on his father's shoulder and whispered something, at which the old man turned deadly white. He asked to be excused, saying that his son had some very important war news to tell him. All that the family could hear was the sentence, "Pa, come out with me."

A strange, creepy feeling stole over that company as they tried to go on with their evening meal. Presently the father came back, looking very aged and ill. The change in his appearance was almost incredible. Could a few moments make

so vast a change? He seemed to be a trembling, worn old man now. Then, with a broken voice he said, "My children, I am to be arrested to-night, and taken to Pretoria to be tried for treason and am to be shot. The Boer Commando is even now on its way to take me."

Plans were made to hide at once, and the curtains were drawn over the windows, and all sat still. Then a noise was heard outside the window, as a voice could be distinctly heard coming nearer the house. All the members of the family threw up their hands in anguish, and the fright on those faces will never be forgotten. However, it turned out to be only one of the native servants outside, and so the sons at once inspanned the cart for their father, and the poor old man kissed each of his children, as he thought, for the last time; then he slipped out into the dark, crawling on his hands and knees to prevent being seen. Before he did this, he urged Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Darroll to hide, or get away in their cart, as it was not safe to let the Boers catch them because they were so wild on account of their recent defeats. He told them it would not be safe for them to remain. However, they said that they would remain and take care of the women.

All the servants were summoned and told not to say a word to anyone, and to keep the movements of the "Old Baas" quite secret. The sons went out to hide in the bush for a few days, and then the daughters and mother asked Mr. Huskisson to hold a service for the family. When our driver came in and heard the news, he declared very piteously, "Now my poor, poor old master will be taken and perhaps shot by the Boers." This saying had such a comical side—for Mr. Huskisson is quite young, and the driver had only known him a few days—that the daughters could not help bursting out into laughter, even amid all their sorrow.

The service began; Mr. Darroll took possession of the harmonium, which was a very good one, and played the tunes of the hymns, while Mr. Huskisson conducted the meeting. They sang the dear old hymn that never grows out of date, "Abide with me." There was much deep emotion as verse after verse was sung, but when they came to the words, "I fear no foe with Thee at hand to bless," every heart was feeling very tender and the voices were very tremulous. A most excellent meeting was held, and, as Mr. Huskisson said, he felt just as if he had suddenly dropped into the middle of a story-book, where

NATIVES WITH SLEIGH: HARVESTING MEALIES CLOSE TO MAJUBA.

the old Covenanters, or Huguenots, were worshipping God unitedly, while an army was on the way to shoot them down.

When this memorable service was over all turned in for the night, but, as the Boers were expected every moment, no one undressed. However, a very heavy thunderstorm broke over the farm, and the lightning and rain were very fierce. It is thought that this must have impeded the progress of the Boer Commando, as they never turned up. So in the morning our men said farewell and again inspanned, and once more drove on, reaching Bloemfontein in safety on Monday.

Here they received a most demonstrative greeting from their old soldier friends, and soon set to work once more.

As there were several agencies at work at Bloemfontein our men did not think it wise, after considering all sides of the question, to start any special work. Some of the agencies were working harmoniously, but a secret was whispered—and whispers in South Africa have a strange way of reaching places hundreds of miles away—that in some directions it would be regarded as an "unfriendly act" if our Mission put up a Soldiers' Home Tent there, though others told us there

was room for twenty tents more. But under these conditions we decided not to erect a tent until the main body of the troops had moved northwards, for of course everyone wanted to be "at the front."

But our men were able to work harmoniously with others, and were kept busy from morning till night, frequently not having leisure so much as to take their meals. To show the sort of work done it may be well to quote a case in point.

Mr. Huskisson was talking to a soldier at the close of a meeting, when he said, "I know you very well indeed, sir." "Really!" said Mr. Huskisson. "What regiment are you in?" After giving the information, he added, "Four years ago I was working at Cape Town, and stood round the Mission Open-Air ring. I was very drunk at the time, but you came up and spoke to me, and I can never forget it." This talk had haunted the man for four years, and at last found him out in Bloemfontein, where he enlisted in the service of the King of Kings.

Soon after reaching Bloemfontein the Highland Brigade was ordered out to the Waterworks, and our men felt that they ought to go out with their brigade.

With regard to this march, Mr. Darroll writes:

"Intending to spend the afternoon in the camp, I went up soon after dinner, and was surprised to find the Highland Brigade and the other regiments forming the 9th Division all in marching order and falling in to proceed. On inquiring, I learnt that the Boers had come down to the waterworks reservoir again, and so we were being sent to engage them. Thus one sees the uncertainty on active service. With only a half-hour's notice, a large camp is moved. Then we hear that a fight is expected the next day, so we decide we must go with our men. Our horses are got ready for the journey, forage is packed up; and early the next morning we start off to overtake our Brigade. The roads are indescribable, being only a track made by the transport wagons, and we cross dangerous spruits that look impassable, with much trembling. At about noon we reached the Division camped by the side of a large dam, and at once outspanned and sat down to some bully beef and biscuits. Then comes the news that the enemy had retired the moment we arrived, and so we are to have no fighting and would soon be returning to Bloemfontein. We had not finished our dinner when a terrible storm commenced which continued all the afternoon and evening. We betook ourselves to the only shelter about—

some Army Service Corps wagons—and huddled together, looking forward to the storm ceasing, intending to visit among the men. But the storm increased, and the whole camp was soon a flood. We had been wise enough to make a ditch around us, and soon we were on a little island. The evening wore on, and there seemed no sign of the rain stopping, and so Mr. Huskisson started off for a farm-house near by—the only one—and happily, knowing a little Dutch, he asked if they could let him have a room for the night. They were naturally very suspicious and prejudiced towards the military, but we managed to get what we wanted, and here we spent the night, together with Mr. Black of the S.C.A., and Mr. Tervet, the 'Argyll' Scripture Reader, sleeping on the floor, and feeling very thankful for the roof overhead. A guard had been stationed around the house to prevent any communication being conveyed to the enemy, and we were able to fill their canteens with hot cocoa, for which we earned their grateful love. The next morning we were interviewed by the farmer and his wife, who brought in our driver as interpreter, and we were asked to explain Lord Roberts' proclamation to them, and perhaps our explanations have produced two more loyalists. Who knows? Then we started off again

towards Bloemfontein, through mud which was feet deep from the yesterday's rain, but reached the town during the day safely, wondering how soon we would be off again on, perhaps, a march with a sadder ending."

After some work at Bloemfontein, Mr. Darroll was taken ill, and had to go to Hospital. As soon as he was out again, Mr. Percy Huskisson was taken ill with fever, and had to be sent to Cape Town.

At this point our story of the Free State operations must close for the present, as it has been thought best to publish this story before the war is ended. So the curtain must be dropped at this point, leaving Mr. Darroll at Bloemfontein, while Mr. Huskisson is travelling to Cape Town with fever.

CHAPTER V.

AT LADYSMITH.

Mr. Smyth had been for some time helping our Mission at Johannesburg while he was in business there. Later on he went to Natal and joined the staff of our Mission, taking up the work in our Soldiers' Home at Maritzburg. Being an old soldier, he naturally understood the needs of the men, and so drew a number of lads around him to the Home. His open, frank nature seemed to fit him for this work, in which he felt at home.

When the war commenced he was joined by Mr. Taylor, who had also been a soldier. These two worked hand-in-hand throughout the campaign. Arrangements were made for the temporary carrying on of the Maritzburg Soldiers' Home, and so these two workers went up to the front, to be near the men they had learned to know so well at the Home. A few days were spent in Ladysmith before war commenced, and several meetings were held, but when war was declared the sphere of work became greatly extended.

CROSSING RIVER IN NATAL EN ROUTE FOR LADYSMITH.

CROSSING A [RIVER] IN NATAL ON THE WAY TO THE RELIEF OF LADYSMITH.

Mr. Walton has furnished the following account of their experiences, which was supplied to him by Mr. Taylor:—

"The meetings continued to be well attended, with very good results, until the morning of the 21st, when our troops were ordered out to Elandslaagte. From two o'clock on this Saturday until Sunday morning, Mr. Smyth and Mr. Taylor were on the field, bringing in the wounded men of the Gordons, Royal Artillery, Manchesters, Devons, and Imperial Light Horse. This was their first experience of dealing with the wounded, and afforded many opportunities of talking with them about spiritual matters, as well as of relieving their sufferings. Mr. Smyth and Mr. Taylor returned to Ladysmith on Sunday, 22nd October, and found a large field of work awaiting them, the military authorities having given them permission to go in and out amongst the men, both in hospital and on the field, without restraint.

"Throughout Sunday their work was confined to our own men, until ten o'clock at night, after which the wounded Dutch prisoners chiefly occupied their attention. These, numbering about seventy-five in all, were quartered in the Dutch Reformed Church.

"All was being done for them that was possible,

under the circumstances, by our own medical officers, but on account of the large number to be attended to, both of British and Boers, there was a great lack of nourishment available. Mr. Smyth and Mr. Taylor made it their first duty to attend to the temporal needs of these poor Dutchman, our own having been supplied. They made beef-tea and other foods for them, and then had some opportunities of personal dealing.

"Referring to one man, lying with his eyes closed, and apparently in great pain, Dr. A —— said, 'This man will soon die.' Three bullets had passed through his lungs. Mr. Taylor whispered a text to him, saying, 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin.' He at once opened his eyes, and said to him, 'I know it.' Talking further with him concerning God and His goodness, he finally said, 'For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain.' He gave Mr. Taylor messages for his friends, and next morning, very early, he passed away.

"Another very interesting case amongst these men was that of a lad apparently about eighteen years of age. He could not speak a word of English, but as our workers were very desirous of speaking to him, Mr. Taylor asked the man next to him if he would kindly act as interpreter,

This man had both his arms shattered, one above the elbow and one below, but notwithstanding, he was ready to act as interpreter to convey the message of God's love to his dying comrade. Next morning, at 10.30, he passed into the presence of the King.

"They found many other interesting cases among these Dutch wounded. A young boy of fifteen, of English parentage, was not wounded, but had been bitten by a puff-adder. He was evidently in very great pain. They found he was a total stranger to God, and after doing their best to alleviate his sufferings they were able to point him to Christ. These are only one or two of the many opportunities our brothers had of telling our political enemies the message of God's love. At Elandslaagte they were enabled to render help to many of the Boers. Amongst these was General Kock.

From the date of this battle until the following one of Tintwa Inyoni, Mr. Smyth's and Mr. Taylor's time was chiefly occupied in caring for the wounded and dying from Elandslaagte. Early in the morning our troops came in contact with the Boer forces, and as the day wore on the engagement became general. During the time our workers were on the field at Elandslaagte, it

was marvellous how their lives were preserved. While bringing a young man of the 42nd Field Battery down from the artillery position to the dressing-station, a distance of about a mile, there was a perfect hail of bullets. Many of the wounded were fearfully torn and bleeding, and had been on the hillside from early morning, many suffering from thirst.

"While our friends were carrying a Colour-sergeant of the Second Gloucester Regiment mortally wounded, he asked them to lay down the stretcher for a time and pray for him. After prayer with him, he gave them his wife's address, and messages to his children, who were at Allahabad in India, but before reaching the dressing-station he passed away. The amount of work to be done this day was very great, and Mr. Smyth and Mr. Taylor had been nineteen hours at work without a break.

"The next engagement was Lombard's Kop, on Monday the 30th. This commenced very early in the morning. Mr. Smyth and Mr. Taylor were sleeping in the Native Church. As the morning broke, they were awakened by the tremendous shriek of a hundred-pound shell from "Long Tom" on Pepworth's Hill. This was the first shell in the bombardment of Ladysmith,

They at once got up, and after some prayer, hurried out to see if they could be of any use. They found the column moving in the direction of Lombard's Kop and accompanied it.

"The bombardment continued through the early morning, and later on our troops came in contact with the enemy, five miles from Ladysmith, and a severe engagement followed.

"The Boers were in great force, and our column could not push them back from their position. The firing ceased about 4 o'clock, the British retiring on Ladysmith. Mr. Smyth and Mr. Taylor at once pushed their way through, into the Boer lines, to bring in our wounded and dead, the Boers having already advanced to the positions our troops had vacated.

"Almost the first man they came across was a Surgeon-Major of R. A. M. C. He had been mortally wounded, and being a medical man he seemed to realize his condition. They conveyed him to the Indian dhoolie and Mr. Taylor spoke to him. He said he had thought very little about spiritual things, but after a little conversation, he asked them to pray with him, which they did, on the field. Asked if he had any message to send to friends, he replied 'No, I am alone in the world, and no one is particularly interested in me.'

They got him right into Ladysmith that evening, but the following morning he died.

"They also met a Sergeant-Major of the 13th Field Battery Royal Artillery. This man's legs were badly shattered by a shell, and he was bleeding profusely. After attending to his wounds, they spoke to him about spiritual matters and were enabled to bring him comfort during the last hours of pain on earth.

"Early next morning Mr. Smyth and Mr. Taylor heard of the disaster to the Irish Fusiliers, Gloucesters, and 10th Mountain Battery. They at once started out to Nicholson's Nek, where a scene met their gaze that no language can describe. Our soldiers had been shot down, and living and dead were huddled together. All that day was spent in helping the wounded. They took the men's emergency rations, and made beef-tea and cocoa, and ministered generally to their relief.

"On the morning of the 2nd November it was found that the Boers had cut off our communications, and laid siege to Ladysmith. On the 1st November all civilians were advised to leave Ladysmith, and very many did so. But work and service for God only seemed to commence in real earnest after siege had been laid to the town.

Daily, and almost hourly, men were being wounded, and in need of help in the town itself and here many opportunities of dealing with them occurred.

"A neutral camp was located about four miles out of Ladysmith, immediately under the foot of Umbulwana, where 'Long Tom' was mounted. Here all the wounded and sick were removed, with all the civilians who cared to go. The military authorities most readily granted Mr. Smyth and Mr. Taylor special permission to visit the neutral camp at Intombi, whenever they choose to do so. They arranged to go alternately. Mr. Smyth going one day, and Mr. Taylor the other. They also collected fruit, and anything they could in the way of nourishment, from the townspeople, and were enabled to take out large supplies of fruit, small cakes, and other things for the sick and wounded.

"This camp became very large, having at one time over 2,000 sick and wounded. One morning one of the nurses asked Mr. Taylor to come over to a line of marquees and see her work. She had charge of the enteric cases. Out of 40 cases in these marquees, 32 were in a delirious condition. No one had anticipated such a lengthy siege, and the nursing staff was insufficient for the great

number of sick and wounded, which daily became larger.

"They visited this camp regularly, till Mr. Smyth was struck down by enteric fever, having been at work almost night and day from the beginning of the siege.

"On the 3rd November, before Mr. Smyth's illness, the battle of Bester's Hill was fought. Here they had many opportunities of helping both our British and Colonial troops. As the siege continued, the work became greater and greater. Churches, chapels, and other buildings had to be used as hospitals, and they found the work of hospital visiting very desirable, and the medical authorities did everything in their power to help them, by pointing out those men who were not likely to recover, and so they were enabled without difficulty to get to the men who needed their help most. During the time they were ministering to the wants of these men, they had many tokens of God's protection. Shells often burst in and around places where they had been working, yet they had been protected. One evening about 6.15, Mr. Taylor was in the Town Hall helping the medical authorities there, when suddenly a 100lb. shell from Gun Hill came and burst about 10 yards from the Town Hall. They at once

commenced to remove the patients into a large hole that had been dug in the vicinity, and were successful in removing some 30 of them before the next shell came. It came through the roof, and burst right in the centre of the hall, killing one man of the Sappers belonging to the Balloon Section.

"An officer of the King's Royal Rifles had kindly given Mr. Smyth a horse captured at Talana Hill. This helped them very much in the work, enabling them to visit the distant outposts very often. On Friday, December 29th, 1899, Mr. Smyth went out to Intombi with baskets of nourishment for the patients, although feeling very unwell. On his return at five o'clock in the evening Mr. Taylor met him at the station, and found he was quite unable to walk back to the house they were occupying. He was carried in, and went to bed, and speedily developed a very bad form of enteric fever. About the middle of January he seemed to be a little better, but had a sudden relapse. Mr. Taylor applied to the officers commanding the Leicestershire Regiment and the 1st King's Royal Rifles, who very kindly lent two men to help to nurse him. Both of these men Mr. Smyth had been instrumental in bringing to Christ previous to this. They

watched over him with devotion and love, thus leaving Mr. Taylor almost free to go on with his work amongst the remaining men in the garrison.

"Week after week passed, but still the expected relief failed to come. About the end of January the foodstuffs became very scarce, rations being cut down to half. The military authorities had placed Mr. Smyth and Mr. Taylor in rations with the No. 1 Bearer Company, so their fare was exactly that of the men. About the middle of February the rations were reduced still further, to 1¼ small biscuits per diem, with almost an unlimited supply of horse-flesh. A factory had been opened at the Railway Station, under the name of 'The Chevril Factory.' 'Chevril' was a preparation made from the flesh of all horses which were unfit for further service, yet it was quite a luxury, and the little pannikin of "Chevril" was often enjoyed. Later, as the month wore on, rations became still scarcer, and the position became more acute.

"Before the siege commenced, a lady leaving the town had placed her house at the disposal of Mr. Smyth and Mr. Taylor, giving them full permission to use it as they felt was wise. This place became a rendezvous for Christian lads coming in from the outposts, and some of them, who had

not had a wash for ten or twelve days, were enabled to have a bath, and brush, and a clean up. Sometimes, although they could give them nothing in the way of eatables, a cup of tea could be supplied, and a little time devoted to prayer, sending them to their outposts refreshed and strengthened in spirit.

"On the morning of the 6th of January, about 2.30 a.m., they were awakened by a tremendous rifle fire quite near the town. Mr. Taylor at once proceeded alone in the direction of Wagon Hill, Mr. Smyth being down with fever, and found the Boers had made a very determined attack to take the Hill and Cæsar's Camp, which are very important positions commanding the town. He arrived there about daybreak, remaining in attendance on the wounded until nine in the evening. At 6.30 a terrible thunderstorm came on, and he was soaked through. He arrived in town with a load of wounded about nine, when he met the principal officer, who asked him if he would take a place in the operating theatre, as they were very short-handed there. He at once consented, and worked on from nine on Saturday night until 6.30 on Sunday morning, in his wet clothes. Between 6.30 and 7.15 he managed to get home and change his clothes, and came on

duty again at 7.15 until 11.30 on Sunday night, all the time attending to the temporal comforts of the wounded men, who belonged chiefly to the Gordon Highlanders, King's Royal Rifles, Imperial Light Horse, Manchesters, Royal Artillery, and Devons.

"On the following Tuesday, Mr. Taylor became very sick with an attack of fever, which lasted about twenty-five days. After this he returned to work again.

"Magic Lantern Services were constantly held at the different camps, the views being scriptural. These meetings were both encouraging and helpful to the men, and very much appreciated by the officers. Of course they had many chances of talking to the men about eternal things, and many will probably never forget those talks. For instance:

"A young officer of the Rifle Brigade had been shot through the spine, and the doctor told him he would soon die. Mr. Taylor spoke to him about the responsibility of standing on the very brink of eternity, without hope and without God. He replied that his life had been given very much to the pleasures of the world, and he had thought very little on religion. Mr. Taylor prayed with him, and went home. Very early in the morn

ing he visited him again, and was informed by the Assistant-Surgeon on duty that Lieut. L—was fast sinking. Although the dying man could only speak with difficulty, he was able to gather from his words that the impression caused was a very real one. He said the address of his relatives in Devonshire would be found under his pillow, and he asked Mr. Taylor to tell them he had accepted Christ as his Saviour, and died resting in Him. This was done as soon as communication was re-opened. In fact, Mr. Taylor despatched a hundred and nineteen letters to relatives of those who had died, by first post after Ladysmith was relieved.

"It was almost impossible to get the men together in large numbers, as our front covered such a large area. There is no truth in the rumour which was spread in England and America about a supposed meeting of over a thousand people, meeting daily for prayer with General White present. It stands to reason that it would not be possible to get a thousand men together when such a large area had to be defended. By visiting the outposts and detachments, Mr. Smyth and Mr. Taylor were able to hold small meetings, and distribute writing paper and literature, which were very much appreciated

by the men. There seemed to be a great demand for 'marked' Testaments and Scripture portions.

"About twelve noon, on the 28th February, our 4·7 Naval guns commenced firing at Umbulwana. Something very unusual was taking place, as our Naval guns had not fired for six weeks previous to this. One of the shells from our guns carried away the derrick which had been erected to remove the guns on Umbulwana. The firing continued from about twelve noon till 4.15, when suddenly a tremendous shout was heard, and looking in the direction of Cæsar's Camp, the vanguard of the relieving force was seen coming along. Young and old, those too feeble from the long-standing sickness and lack of the common necessaries of life, all bounded in the direction in which the relieving force was coming. Shouts from every side were heard. Bells rang, guns fired, and as the vanguard of the Imperial Light Horse and the Natal Carbineers came in, the sight can be more easily imagined than described."

Mr. Walton adds:—"The siege was now over. As we passed through the battlefields, the awfulness of war was apparent on all sides. Intombi was reached with its tent hospitals, with 1,500 sick, suffering, and convalescents. The silent graveyard adjoining with its six hundred graves,

Mr. ION SMYTH, WHO DIED IN LADYSMITH, MARCH 15TH, 1900.

told of 'Pestilence that walketh in darkness,' the majority having died of fever and dysentery. The walking skeletons spoke of famine, while the look of strain on many a face revealed to us something of those long hours of anxiety. A telegram had summoned me to the death-stricken town. Ion Smyth, our missionary to the soldiers, was tossing with fever in the hospital known as 'Tin Camp.'

"We passed into one of the officers' wards. Mr. Smyth was in a burning fever. For thirteen weeks he had been suffering, sometimes better, only to be followed by a relapse.

"Many a man who visited our Soldiers' Home at Maritzburg thanks God to-day that he learnt to trust his Saviour through the instrumentality of Ion Smyth. During those dreary months, while besieged in Ladysmith, more were led from death to life.

"Captain McDermott, R.A.M.C., in whose care Smyth had been for weeks, was still hopeful of his recovery, and no one could have watched him more carefully and nursed him more tenderly than he.

"The day after my arrival his temperature was still high, and the next day he was much better. A severe relapse followed. He became too weak

to speak except on one occasion, and gradually sank, passing away at 1.5 p.m., on March 15th.

"At 12.30 the next day, a few of us committed his dust to the Lord's care, 'Till He come.' Many soldiers would have come, but were not able, owing to shifting camps. The body, covered by the Union Jack as it passed through the street, was saluted by the passing soldiers, and thus closed a short life spent in the service of others, and it is believed that Ion Smyth contracted the fever which proved fatal while nursing two sick soldiers."

The cost of the war in human life is terrible. As a mission, we feel the loss of each worker acutely, but we are glad that we have in some way been enabled to give of our best in the service of God and others. No life laid down in self-forgetting service can ever be lost. For if a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it brings forth much fruit.

INTERIOR SOLDIERS' HOME TENT No. 2, BASE HOSPITAL, WYNBERG

CHAPTER VI.

AMONGST THE SICK AND WOUNDED.

As soon as the war commenced, the troops that had been stationed at Wynberg were naturally drafted up to the front, and so our Soldiers' Home was left empty, as there were no men to come to it. As the large permanent camp was empty, it was most natural to turn it into a great Base Hospital, for it is admirably situated for such a purpose.

And very soon it was needed. Wounded men were sent down from up-country after the engagements at Belmont and Graspan, and the hospital grounds were filling up with small marquees, admirably fitted up for the wounded men. But there was no place where the wounded men could spend their evenings or spare time when convalescent, except in their small tents, and a notice appeared in the daily papers from Col. Duke asking for a marquee for the purpose. To the very hospitable Colonial people the very mention

of a need of the wounded men meant the supply of that need. We went out and interviewed the Colonel, and arrangements were made for us to have a site cleared for our tent, which was ordered at once. This large marquee cost about £60, and was soon finished and on the spot, being nicknamed "the Drawing-room" by the men. A great many ladies helped us to furnish the tent and make it look nice. A number of cushions were sent to us, and Madeira lounge chairs, as well as ferns and other plants. From the very start this place was splendidly patronized by the men, and the sight was very pretty when a number of men were sitting about reading or writing, as their blue jackets and red facings made the place look very bright. We had also arranged a number of flags, the men especially liking the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes. This tent was used at Christmas time for a number of teas for the men. We were asked to lend it to different people as a place to let the men have a good Christmas tea in, and then we ourselves gave another tea for the Orderlies and men of the R.A.M.C. and St. John's Ambulance. The crowd was so great that there had to be relays of men having tea, as all could not be crowded into the tent at once.

Mr. and Mrs. Simmonds, two of our Mission

AMONG THE SICK AND WOUNDED AT WYNBERG DISCHARGING CONVALESCENTS FROM HOSPITAL.

OUTSIDE OUR RECREAT ON TENT, WYNBERG HOSPITAL.

workers, took charge of the work in the Tent, and they suggested that permission might be obtained from the General Manager of the Railways to allow us to place some large baskets at the Cape Town Railway Station where business men, on arriving at the Station, could drop in their newspapers for the wounded men. Then we hired an extra worker, who takes these papers, numbering from 80 to 150, out to the Wynberg Hospital every morning at about nine o'clock, and distributes them amongst the wounded men in the various marquees.

This work amongst the sick and wounded brought us in close contact with the men of the Medical Corps, and we invited them down to our Soldiers' Home, which is quite close to the Camp, though out of bounds for the wounded men, who are not allowed to leave the Hospital grounds. The men of the Medical Corps came down in good numbers, and the Wynberg Home has been kept open for them ever since. Numbers come in every night, and seem to very much appreciate the advantages of the Home. On Sundays we give a free tea in the afternoon to any of the Medical Corps men who care to come, and of course this invitation covers the men of the St. John's Ambulance. Large numbers come every

Sunday to this tea, and a nice number stay on for the evening meeting in the Soldiers' Home. Mr. Simmonds and his wife have charge of this Home, as well as of the Tent in the Hospital grounds, and have won the friendship of all the men in a very splendid way. This work also had the result of bringing us the goodwill of the medical officers and nurses, who gave us an open door for our work.

One condition on which we were allowed to put up this "Drawing-room" was, that no meetings should be held in it, as it would need to be always at the disposal of the wounded men, who had nowhere to sit about except on their beds. It was thought that the Roman Catholic men would not feel free to come into it while we held a meeting. Be that as it may, the men did not seem to share this view, and even the Roman Catholic soldiers came into other meetings of their own free will when they got the chance. But of course we are not bent on proselytizing.

Feeling that something ought to be done for the wounded men in the way of services, we interviewed the Senior Medical Officer, Colonel Duke, who very kindly said that while he did not feel free to allow meetings in the "Drawing-room," still we could have another tent, or else have the use of a room which was sometimes used for

concerts, so that we might hold meetings. However, it was planned that, first of all, we should try the effect of open-air meetings, and, if these did not prove satisfactory, that then we should have a marquee granted to us for this purpose.

We started the open-air meetings, and had a fair attendance, asking the Rev. Deane Oliver, a very sympathetic Church of England chaplain, to take the first few meetings. The evenings were unfortunately very cold, as a sudden change of weather had set in. About the third Sunday Mr. Simmonds was ill, and so he asked Mr. Wheeler of the S.C.A. to take his meeting. The evening happened to be extra cold, and so Mr. Wheeler went to Colonel Duke, and asked him if a tent could not be lent, as it seemed a shame to keep the men waiting about in the cold. This brought matters to a head, and soon after Mr. Wheeler lent us a tent, which some friends in England had sent out, and without our knowing what was being done the Tent was put up in a corner of the grounds where none of the men cared to go. Consequently the Tent stood there some weeks unused, while we carried on our Meetings in the Orderlies' marquee, which was kindly placed at our disposal for an hour on Sunday night. Here some very snug little meetings were held.

But later on Mr. Simmonds spoke to Colonel Duke, who had a space cleared next to our "Drawing-room" tent, and the tent of the S.C.A. was taken down and put up adjoining our large marquee. The meetings in this tent are very well attended, and Mr. and Mrs. Simmonds seem to have won the hearts of the wounded men, who ask eagerly when the next meeting will be held. We purposely have only a few meetings every week, so as not to let the men get used to them: we want them to look forward to the meeting night. Mr. Hinde, of the S.C.A., who is one of Miss Sande's workers, is staying at Wynberg, and has been doing a splendid work amongst the men. He is heart and soul with us, and speaks frequently in our meetings, being a great favourite amongst the men. Mr. Kinahan, of Belfast, has also shown very real sympathy towards us.

Mr. Simmonds thought it would make the tent more like a "Drawing-room" if we bought a piano, and so a very nice one was secured, and the men seem very fond of playing on it. Every evening the men gather round it and have some hymn singing, Sankey's hymn-book of course being the favourite.

Very often straws show how the wind blows better than very elaborate weathercocks, and just

so it often happens that the small things the men do indicate how deeply grateful they feel for what we are able to do to help them. Very often as Mr. and Mrs. Simmonds are leaving the Tent at night, and walk home in the dark, they meet the military police who do a sentry duty at a dark spot where there is a gate. These men generally light a match when they hear our workers coming, so as to help them in passing through the dark parts of the path. A little action like this shows a spirit of appreciation and gratitude in a way that no outwardly great action could.

A large amount of note-paper is used in the tent, and of course is supplied gratis. The pens and penholders have a most wonderful nack of disappearing, and so Miss Sprigg planned that a local Christian Endeavour Society should keep us supplied with pens and penholders. Much local help is also given to us for the Soldiers' Home. The free tea on Sunday is largely rendered possible through the kindness of the Wynberg people. One person sends in a pound of tea every week, another sends in a loaf of bread regularly, and another supplies butter or some other article, and some send in a few shillings weekly to cover the expenses. If we were not so generously supported thus, we could hardly

afford to give free teas every Sunday to some fifty to seventy men.

As a natural result of being in touch with the medical officers, nurses, and orderlies, we have a very free hand amongst the wounded men, for it is instinctively felt that we are only there to do the men good, and wish to attend to their physical wants just as much as to their spiritual needs. It is surprising how, without any pushing, we have got all that we could want, while many others have done their utmost to get half the liberty we have, by agitating, only to fail.

The stories the men tell us are most deeply interesting, and we begin to see the war through Tommy's spectacles; in fact, I began to think that I would have to write a history of the war from the standpoint of the soldiers, and call it "Through Tommy's Spectacles." And rest assured it would be a most interesting book, for Tommy sees a good deal more than ever gets into print. However, life is too short for a missionary to attempt such a book, even had he the literary capacity.

Let us glance at a few short stories which we heard from the wounded men.

In yonder marquee there lies a man who was wounded in the spine. The spinal wounds seem

to have been the worst of all, and it is most distressing to see these poor fellows dying, or else semi-recovering only to be maimed for life. This soldier had been a bright Christian, but, in spite of his wife's entreaties, had grown cold in his love to God. He was very badly wounded in his spine. One night he was suddenly taken very ill and was seized with a very marked rigor. The doctor was called, and it was thought that he would not live to see the light of another day. In his extremity he began to think of his wife at home, and felt sure she was constantly praying for him. Her prayers seemed to haunt him, and a great spirit of contrition and penitence seemed to fill his soul that night. Suddenly the shivering fit ceased, and he began to rally; and, though he is still paralyzed in both his legs, yet the doctors have great hopes for him. He is now extremely bright and happy, and only a few days ago he suddenly began to feel sensation in his toe: as he put it, "I feel my toe." Slowly he is recovering, and what a meeting he will have with his wife when he gets home! How fully will her prayers have been answered!

Naturally the men tell us endless accounts of marvellous escapes, and narrow shaves of being killed. One man had been in five engagements

and had come through them without a scratch, though again and again the men fell in numbers around him. He began to brag, and boasted about his good luck. Soon after, he was in an engagement and thought he was safe through it, when he held up his hand to beckon to a wagon which was taking the wrong road. A Mauser bullet shot off the end of his middle finger, and he tied a piece of rag round it, and then rode on. As he was galloping off on his horse, some Boers saw him and fired a volley after him, and, strange to say, the only bullet that struck him hit the very same finger, only a little lower down. He said afterwards that he was paid out for his boasting. But something better than this happened, for he came to the meetings we held and yielded himself to God, to live henceforth for Him, and he is now a changed man.

Some of the men who have been wounded are very keen to get back to the front, but others say they have had "quite enough of it." One young Scotch lad, not twenty years old, was shot in five places, and suffered terribly, yet he was ever so keen to get back to the front; but that was impossible as he was badly wounded in the leg, arm, hand, shoulder, and thigh.

Early in the campaign a man came down to

Wynberg badly wounded in the spine. He had some five other companions in the same marquee who were also wounded in the spine, and four of them died while he was lying ill. He had been a very wild fellow, and had a brother at home who was a worse character still. This brother at home had been lately very brightly converted, and kept on writing out very straight letters to his brother who lay wounded at Wynberg. This made a very deep impression on him. He thought he had better follow the example of his brother, and so he gave himself over to God, and became a very bright Christian. He is now invalided home, but is on the highway to recovery.

To show how the wounded Christians seek to bring their comrades into our meetings, mention must be made of a certain Australian. He was a Christian, but, somewhat against his conscience, I fancy, had decided to come out to fight in the war. As his sister said good-bye to him she remarked, "Depend upon it, Jack, you are sure to be wounded early in the campaign." These words seemed prophetic, but he laughed, and said he would get through without a scratch. I suppose there hardly ever was a soldier who imagined that *he* would be shot. Others would of course; but who imagines that he himself will be killed?

However, this Australian came down wounded with the first batch of men, and when he was well enough he came to our meetings; and now he is ever so bright. He loves to go round among the men, and bring them along to the meetings, and so is a most valuable help to us.

There is also an old man in the Hospital, who joined the forces in Natal; he is an old soldier, and must be over sixty years of age. He seems to have joined as stretcher bearer, or in some such capacity. But he was sent up to Modder River, and after the battle there was left on the field, wounded in the stomach. When the Boers came up to where he was they looked at him and thought he would die soon. So they said aloud to one another, "It's no use taking him as he will be sure to die soon," and so they left him on the field untended. He lay there all that day and night, and all the next day and night, and in the following morning he was found by our Medical Corps men, and taken care of. He, too, came to the meetings in the tent, and has begun to live the new life even in his old age.

It is wonderful what tales of suffering the Wynberg Hospital could tell. Another young fellow was wounded, and slipped down the bank of the river, so that as our ambulance passed by

they never saw him. He lay there all the night, and next morning fell lower down into the edge of the river. He was for four days lying wounded, and without any food, when the Boers found him. They sent word, it is said, to our General, who was so touched by the poor fellow's sufferings that he wanted to fetch him at all costs; however, the Boers refused to allow him to be attended to till five Boer prisoners were handed back for this one man. The exchange was made, but the poor young fellow was so exhausted that he died a few days after reaching Wynberg.

We hear very different stories from the men as to the kindness or unkindness of the Boers to the wounded prisoners. In many cases the men say the Boers were extremely kind, and could not do more for them than they did. Others tell the most ghastly tales of cruelty, which they saw with their own eyes.

It would not be fair to imagine that this cruelty is typical of the true Boer. Some very ignorant Boers might be betrayed into isolated acts of cruelty. The average Boer has a very kind heart, and so, after writing out a story that would make "good copy," I have destroyed it.

Very many of the wounded soldiers show no ill-feeling at all to the Boers, for they say it is

not their fault that they are fighting, for Kruger and Steyn have forced them into it.

The work in the hospital at Wynberg is most interesting, and the kindness of the Cape people in providing for the needs of the patients, whether they be Dutch or English, is a very bright page in the gloomy book of the war.

IN THE DOCKS, CAPE TOWN.

CHAPTER VII.

MEETING THE TROOPS AT THE CAPE TOWN DOCKS.

A MAN'S idea of a new country turns a good deal on his first impressions, and so we thought we ought to try and do something to give the men a welcome. We have had a Sailors' Rest inside the dock gates for over a dozen years, but this was usually out of bounds for the troops. When the *Gaul* arrived with the "Fighting Fifth" on board, Mr. Hurrell, our Sailors' Worker, obtained permission from the Colonel to allow the "Rest" to be in bounds. A good number of the men were glad to get ashore and write letters home, and two open-air meetings were held among the men, one in the morning, and the other at night, when the men were all aboard. There were some bright Christian men on board, and, as our band of workers said "Good-night" and left the ship, these Christian men gave them a farewell by singing, "When the roll is called up yonder, I'll be there."

Little by little the way opened out for helping the men. One day Mr. Hurrell found that the men were keen to get some paper to write home on, and so he went to the Sailors' Rest and brought out his whole supply. This soon vanished, as the men were so keen to get it. Very often the first thing the men would ask for would be paper and pencil so as to write home.

A letter was inserted in the local papers asking for note paper for free distribution amongst the men who were landing. A very ready response followed, and Mr. Hurrell found himself in possession of a large stock of paper, envelopes, and pencils. He wisely asked for a permit from the military authorities to board the troopships for the purpose of giving away the paper, and this was readily granted.

Armed with as much paper as he and a friend could carry, they went down to the South Arm, and found that an enormous demand existed for the paper. On the troopships the men would crowd around and almost crush him, and so Mr. Hurrell, being an old sailor, would climb up to some out-of-the-way place and shout out, "Now, boys, if you will just keep quiet and not crush, you will all be able to get as much paper as you want." Quieted by this promise they

formed into line, and it was an easy matter to hand the paper round. Then followed a very amusing scene; the men would lie flat down on their faces on the deck to write, and others would try to find a few square inches of level surface on the steam winch, or on the companion ladders. The originality displayed in finding a place to write on was very amazing.

Mr. Hurrell would then leave the ship, promising to call back in a few hours to collect the letters.

When the transports arrived in great numbers, it was a hard matter to meet the demand. Hitherto a number of pencils had to be lent round amongst the men, but it became imperative to get the pencils cut up small, so that two pieces of paper and a pencil might be enclosed in each envelope. It took a great deal of labour to packet all these pieces of paper and pencils, and so several of our lady workers would spend a morning at our Sailors' Rest getting these things done up, so as to save trouble and time when the actual distribution was made. Supply after supply of paper would come down to the Sailors' Rest.

At first the paper and envelopes were sent down in the ordinary packets; then some kind friend thought it would save trouble if the paper were folded and placed in the envelopes; after this a

friend sent down the paper folded and enclosed in envelopes, and in addition hundreds of pencils already sharpened; and a lady friend capped all this by enclosing a sharpened pencil with each piece of note paper inside an envelope! These tiny touches show how much thought there was behind the gift; and it makes a vast difference in the amount of work one or two men can do amongst an eager crowd, if the paper is folded and placed in an envelope.

More than one hundred thousand men have thus been supplied with note paper, and they have given us many thousands of letters to post for them—this department of work requiring a good deal of work, as anyone can tell who stamps a thousand or two envelopes, and rewrites an address in pencil with ink.

In addition to this, hundreds of pounds have been entrusted to us to send home for the men. The checking of all these amounts, and the details of organizing this department of work, so that all the details about every Post Office order—its sender, its destination, the address of the sender and his regimental number, &c.—may be preserved in case any accident happens to it, has entailed much work.

Many very interesting incidents have happened

in connection with this work: for instance, two officers came up to Mr. Hurrell and said "What are you giving away? Tracts?" "No, sir," said Mr. Hurrell, "it is only note paper." "Will you let us have some?" they said, and added "You might have enclosed a tract as well." Then they asked that the people who thus thought of their men might be thanked for their kindness.

On boarding one of the troopships, the men said "Fancy having that stuff for us; it is just what we were saying we wanted; now we shall be able to send a line home before we go to the front." On another boat one soldier said to his friends, "Here, boys, what do you think of this? Here are two sheets of notepaper, two envelopes, and a pencil for every man, and a fellow here will post your letter to England; and all this for a penny!" Some men came and asked what Mission we belonged to, saying that they knew no one would think of giving paper away free like this except Christians. Some Scotchmen said that the soldiers would always believe in the religion of men who thought of others in this way. On one of the boats on which the notepaper was given away (before the ship sailed up the coast with troops) the men got together on the deck

and gave three ringing cheers "for the man with the note paper."

One night Mr. Hurrell found that the guard had been overlooked in the heavy rush of work, and had not had any food since breakfast. It was late at night when he found out this, and so he went and brought down some tea and bread and cheese for them. The corporal was rather cross and irritable, and didn't want any of our "religion"; when Mr. Hurrell came back with this tea he found the corporal asleep, and so he touched him and gave him the tea. The corporal looked up rather crossly, and spoke somewhat disdainfully of tea, thinking it was some ship's tea. He sipped it, and his countenance changed, and then he said, "This is the best tea I have tasted since leaving home." The man's heart was softened now; for the word "home" brought back tender memories; and it need hardly be said that he thought very differently of Mr. Hurrell and his Mission.

On another boat the Major took all the note paper from Mr. Hurrell, saying he would personally see that the men got it, and thus enabled Mr. Hurrell to get off to give paper to some other men. This Major asked him to thank the people from him for so kindly thinking of his men and their needs.

INDIAN SERVANTS FOR OFFICERS CAPE TOWN DOCKS.

There was naturally a good deal of work in connection with Christmas dinners for the soldiers and sailors. In addition to the usual large dinner in the Sailors' Rest, where the men seemed to enjoy themselves heartily, some 140 of the 18th Hussars were supplied with food on board a transport, as the Rest was out of bounds for them. The Major said he could not put the Rest in bounds, but sent up a corporal and two men to fetch the food down. A few days after Christmas, Mr. Hurrell met some of the Guards who had been at one of the Camps near Town: they had come out with the 18th Hussars, but had been drafted off to a camp on arriving at Cape Town. Some of these men had to come in to help to unload stores, and Mr. Hurrell asked them "Well, how did you get on on Christmas Day?" "Christmas?" they said. "Why we only had dry biscuit and bully beef for dinner." When they heard how the Hussars had fared, they said "There, that is just like our luck: we miss all the good things." This conversation took place as they were making their dinner off dry biscuit on the landing stage. "Could you eat a piece of plum pudding if I brought it down to you?" said Mr. Hurrell, with a smile. "Just try us," was their short answer. Mr. Hurrell did try them, and they kept their word.

Then tea was sent down to some of the men on guard at the South Arm on Christmas Day, as the men could not get up to the tea.

With regard to sailors, not many can get off to the Rest just now, as the transports are insured as long as they are in the Bay; but if the men go ashore and any accident happens the owners forfeit their insurance. So the only thing to be done is to visit them in our boat, and give them magazines, papers, &c., and hold services on board.

It might be thought that it would work well to make one ship a Bethel, and gather the sailors from different ships to that one: but Mr. Hurrell finds that this plan does not work nearly so well out here as it does at home. It seems to cause a great deal of ill-feeling amongst the men, and it pays to take the extra trouble of visiting each ship separately. To do this properly we need a launch of some description, and probably a boat with an oil motor would be best.

It was not often that there was any unpleasantness, though one can well understand that this sort of work may seem to bring civilians into a position where their presence is very awkward and in the way. One evening the paper was being given away on a transport to a large crowd of men. It so happened that the bugle sounded,

which told all the men to leave the upper deck. Mr. Hurrell did not notice this bugle, as he was so busy at his work. However, a Sergeant-major came up and took Mr. Hurrell by the shoulders and gave him a good shaking — at least, Mr. Hurrell said so — but anyone who knows Mr. Hurrell's portly proportions may be excused from believing this fact. The Sergeant-major was very angry, and demanded to see his permit for being on board. This was produced, but the Sergeant-major asked him in a gruff way, "Didn't you hear that bugle, just now? And why do you stay on the deck?" He then told him that if he did not get off the deck in double quick time he would chuck him off. This would have been a most interesting ceremony, and no doubt would have made this subordinate officer feel very small. However, Mr. Hurrell thought the best thing to do was to give a gentle answer to all this rude bluster. So after being told that he would be reported to the Colonel and all sorts of people, he quietly walked off the deck, but it was easy to see what the men thought of this proceeding.

But Mr. Hurrell was not to be beaten. Next morning he came to the ship and spent the whole morning amongst the men, and several other sergeants came up to him and said how sorry

they were to see him so rudely treated the previous night, and added, "But you must remember, sir, that the man who was so rude to you has suffered twice from sunstroke, and is always cross with everyone." These men urged Mr. Hurrell to go and report the matter to the Colonel, who would soon get matters squared. But this is not our work, so the peace was easily secured.

After we had been thus at work in the Docks for some months, the S.C.A. seemed anxious to join in this branch of the work, and a shed was erected by them for the object of facilitating the work. But Mr. Hurrell found that the great part of the burden of this work still fell on his shoulders, though the S.C.A. and the Y.M.C.A. frequently sent men to help. But a work like this is not romantic, and wants real plodding, and experience teaches us that plodders are the hardest people to find.

Our attention had also been turned to the problem as to whether we could manage to give tea and food to the troops as they disembarked, and we hunted round the South Arm for a place. We saw a spot that seemed to us very suitable, but feared that the military authorities would not thank us if we got possession of it, as we should be much in the way. It also seemed difficult to

keep up this work, which would require many helpers and much plodding. As we were thinking of this branch of work, a notice appeared in the local papers saying that a large committee, to be called "Tommy's Welcome," was to be formed, and we found that the very spot we had looked at was to be used for the purpose. So of course we stopped thinking any more on this point, and were glad that others were going to take up this work, as the men often had to entrain for the north, feeling very empty in the region close to their fourth waistcoat button. Incidentally, we heard many of the officers complaining that these "Tommy's Welcome" people were very much in the way—the very thing we feared. However, all were glad that the men should have a warm welcome, even if it did rather crowd the South Arm at times. Thousands of men received good food through these "Tommy's Welcome" workers, and the men will never forget the hospitality and kindness of the Cape Town people, who really did so much to meet their needs in many directions. Quite a number of men spoke in the highest terms of the hospitality shown at the Cape; and, of course, hospitality is one of the very cardinal virtues of Colonial people; and so the "Tommy's Welcome" workers must be complimented on the valuable work they did with so much success.

CHAPTER VIII.

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

A SHORT SKETCH OF OUR WORK AMONGST SOLDIERS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

THE soldiers' work was virtually started by Mrs. Osborne, in 1881. There was then no systematic gospel work for our soldiers in Cape Town. As a class they were forgotten, except in one or two instances. There was not a single place in Cape Town to which the men could go to spend their evenings.

In 1880, Mrs. Osborne started some Bible Readings for the men, but it was felt that something more permanent was needed. Teas were given and picnics were planned, but the great need was a building where the men could spend their evenings. The Presbyterian Church in Cape Town gave a collection of £20 towards the start of such a place, and a small Home was opened by Mrs. Osborne. An amusing story is told of one

of the soldiers who was blessed in the Home. He said one night before all his comrades, "I seriously made up my mind to give up drink. In furtherance of my object I went out for a walk and managed to pass several canteens without going in. At last I halted about a dozen yards beyond the last one and said to myself, 'Resolution! you are a brick. Resolution! you have stood by me to-night and carried me past all these canteens. Resolution! you've done me a good turn, and one good turn deserves another. Resolution! come in and have a drink.' I need not tell you what condition I was in when I reached the barracks." But this soldier found out a more excellent way at the Home.

But this Home was too small, and so in 1884 a new Home was started nearer the Barracks, which was opened by His Excellency Sir Leicester Smyth, who was then Administrator at the Cape. But later on an old Schoolroom came into the market, and this was bought, and then for the first time the Home and Hall for meetings were under the same roof—a thing that is almost essential. Hitherto various halls had to be hired for the teas and meetings.

Miss Hilder joined Mrs. Osborne in 1881, and helped in the work, giving much time to the

hospital visiting, and going round the married quarters.

The work seems to have been welcomed by the officers, who at once perceived the advantage such work was to their men. In the case of one Regiment it was said that never before was it known to have so many steady men in it; and the Colonel in command sent a cheque for £10 to the Soldiers' Home people, out of the Regimental Funds, as a token of the value he placed on the work.

But Wynberg, which is a pretty suburb of Cape Town, had a large Camp also, and so a Home was opened there in 1890, and Miss Wright was placed in charge. She urged the fact that Soldiers' Home work was pre-eminently Woman's work. This is the almost universal judgment of all workers amongst soldiers, except a few men who would relegate all Christian women to the nursery or kitchen. However, it is too late in the day to pay much attention to such criticism, for as the Americans would say, women have "come to stay" in Christian work. Of course it is rather humbling to human pride, but we find that one good woman is worth many indifferent men.

But soldiers were not very popular in those days, and it needed a war to make them popular.

They are now the heroes of the hour. Alas, it is to be feared, it is only for the hour. In 1892 a soldier said, "People appear to be frightened of us, even in the churches; the ladies squeeze up into the corner of the pew for fear that the red paint might come off our coats, and gentlemen look down on us as a bad lot. Who cares?" The question may well be asked. Ever since we took over Mrs. Osborne's work, some ten or twelve years ago, and added to it and consolidated the whole into the South Africa General Mission, we have found that the vast majority of people looked askance at the soldiers' work. Some mothers did not wish their daughters to come near us because red coats could be seen in our meetings. Others thought the work very vulgar, and taunted us with having "scarlet fever." Judge our surprise when there was a sudden upheaval of all this feeling at the declaration of war. People became almost hysterical in their devotion to the long-forgotten Tommy. I remarked to one of the men how glad I was to see the general interest shown in the welfare of the soldiers. His answer set me thinking: "You should just hear what we fellows say in the barracks. Now it's all 'Tommy this and Tommy that,' but you just wait till the war is over and

then it will be, 'Get out of the way with you, you dirty fellow.' We have seen this sort of thing before, and we know how long the interest will last." Let it be devoutly hoped that these men are mistaken.

Early in 1891 a new worker was placed in charge of the Home in the person of Miss Arnot. In March of the same year she wrote: "The vast majority of the men avoid as yet coming to the Home, the canteens and dancing saloons claim many of them . . . . Over one hundred people had tea at our Home on Friday, about half being soldiers. It was such a pretty sight to see so many red coats, underneath which beat so many tender hearts craving for real sympathy, and finding so little in this colony." It soon became evident that Miss Arnot has a genius for this special work. She moved about the Home like a queen amongst her people. I think everyone who saw her in the Home admitted that never had they seen one so suited for the work. She commanded the respect of all the men, and could almost do what she liked with them, and yet never was betrayed into the usual weak point in such Homes, namely, of allowing a small clique of a few favourites to be formed around her. While she drew all the men to her, she

kept them all off at an equal distance as if by magic.

Soon after taking up this work, she felt impelled to go and hunt for the soldiers even in the canteens and dancing saloons. This was a new departure which shocked a good many good people, who thought it very improper. Early in the next year ('92) the following report appeared in our official organ, the *South African Pioneer* :—

"Our Saturday night work in the public-houses is very encouraging. When we first commenced this work some few skirmishes had to be encountered with the canteen-keepers, as trade was spoiled, they said, by our visiting those places. However this has very much calmed down, and we are left very much to the freedom of our own will."

These "skirmishes" need a little explanation. Miss Arnot and Miss Haupt, a Dutch worker, used to go together to visit these canteens. On one occasion the barman came up to Miss Arnot in the saloon at the back of his bar, which was filled with soldiers. Miss Arnot was giving away notices about the meetings at the Soldiers' Home to the men. The barman walked up to her and seized her by the arm. She looked at him with a withering glance, and in a moment all the soldiers

rushed round her, and took the barman by the neck, and gave him a lesson he is not likely to forget during the rest of his life. Ever after this he was most polite to her, and was perfectly willing to let her visit the men in his saloon as often as she wished. No doubt the other barmen heard all about this, and any fear of opposition naturally died down.

On one occasion when Miss Arnot went into the canteen she found it crowded with soldiers in a merry (?) condition. She passed through the inner door to go into the dancing saloon, and the barman told her the lads there were rather a rough set of men. However, she pushed on, and on entering the room a soldier cried out, "Have a dance, Miss?" And another cried out, "Have a drink, Miss?" She took the men in hand at once, and explained that she had a joy in her heart that was better than all the dances in the world, and that Christ gave her a well of living water inside her heart which sprang up into everlasting life. At once they became quiet, and seemed very glad to accept the notices about the meetings in the Soldiers' Home, and quite a number of them turned up at the meeting on the Sunday night. When Eternity dawns we shall probably see many a rescued soul that was on the

broad, cheerless pathway to ruin, whose weary feet and heart were turned *Zion*wards through those visits to the canteens which were thought so improper. However, the criticism soon died away in very shame, for many who had criticized felt they had not half the pluck or half the love that would enable them to bear such a fiery ordeal.

This work led on to much visiting of the canteen-keepers and their wives in their homes—a branch of parochial visitation that I fancy is apt to be conveniently forgotten.

We could give many instances where mothers in the Old Country have written to us letters of thanks for looking after their boys, and these men themselves will never forget the happy times spent in the Home. One man said pathetically that he was going to England; but though he was going to his old home, still he felt more as if South Africa and the Soldiers' Home were his true home, and added that he felt as if he were going to a foreign country.

Since the war has been raging out here in South Africa, we have met many of the troopships as they land, and when the men see Mr. Hurrell, and recognize that he is in the South Africa General Mission, the first thing they ask him is, "Where is Miss Arnot?" On hearing that she

is now Mrs. Gibson, and that she is still heart and soul in the work, and has been helping us at Johannesburg, they say, "Oh, yes, we know that; we always follow her movements; but is she in Cape Town now, since the war has started?"

As Miss Arnott said in 1892, "Many touching little instances might be related of the work amongst our soldiers during the past year. It is with deep gratitude to God that we can tell of victories won. Most of our Christian men kept true to their colours, never flinching at the many jeers and jests of their companions. Alas, there are a few who have fled from the field at the sight of the enemy, and are now wretchedly bemoaning their want of faith in God. But, friends, how little we know of the awful temptations of a barrack-room life. Drunkenness seems to be the greatest vice amongst our troops in South Africa. Could you but see the lads, many of them so young, being led away by old associates, their bright, boyish faces losing their youthful appearance by sin."

At Wynberg, we placed Mrs. de Villiers, one of our Dutch workers, in charge of the Soldiers' Home. She went there in September, 1891, and was most successful in the work. It might have been thought that a Dutch worker would hardly

do for an English Soldiers' Home. But it is wonderful how real grace smooths down all such inequalities. A splendid band of Colonial young men rallied round her, and the work seemed to be richly blessed. The Home was always full of men, who took very well to their Dutch "mother," as the sister in charge is always called by the men.

It is very wonderful to see how cleverly the Dutch women can manage to get what they want from their friends. "Mother" de Villiers was no expense to the Mission, for one Dutch friend would send in her dinner, and another her tea; a third would supply her with boots, and others would see to her various wants, and thus be drawn to take an interest in this work. Surely it is very highly to the credit of these Dutch friends to have thus practically shown their interest in work amongst British soldiers.

It was a rather trying ordeal for a Dutch lady to visit a Military Camp. This is what Mrs. de Villiers said, when thinking about it afterwards, "I can hardly describe my first visit to the soldiers' camp. If I had given way to my feelings, and had there been either a place to hide one's self in, or wings to fly with—well, I would have done so; for I saw all the difficulties, and felt like quitting the field." She then adds that the

soldiers take to her Dutch ways so kindly and are getting quite used to her style of work. The fact is, she was extremely popular amongst the men.

In the middle of 1892, the Cape Town Home was renovated and General and Mrs. Cameron kindly re-opened it. And in fact whenever we have started a new Home we have had the pleasure of having it opened by the General in Command at the Cape, and we have received nothing but kindness and help from the military authorities at all times. But all who know the Military will not be surprised at this but would be surprised if it were otherwise. Of course we have frequently had the sympathy and help of the local Ministers of the various Churches as well.

The Cape Town Home was several times renovated, but it was felt to be a little too far away from the barracks, being in the wrong direction as well. A fresh Home was therefore secured in Plein Street, which is close to the barracks. This Home, too, hardly met our needs, and now we are fitting up our large premises and Hall in Longmarket Street for the Headquarters of our soldiers' work in the country. This new Home has a large temperance bar, reading room, writing room, bath room and lavatory, and large hall. The entire building is re-decorated, and many archways have

been cut between the various rooms, extra stairways put up, and so forth. This makes the Home a very handy building, and it is in a street which runs direct almost from the barracks. The soldiers have taken deep interest in the alterations, and go and tell their companions what a wonderful Home it will be.

During these many years, quite a number of our mission workers have undertaken the soldiers' work. To give a detailed list of these and of the routine work would be monotonous, but year in and year out the work has been going on, and regiment after regiment has been glad of the facilities afforded them in the Homes at Cape Town and Wynberg.

Of course in addition to the meetings held in the Homes, which are held on Sundays and on two or three week nights as well, meetings were also held in the barracks. In August, 1894, these meetings were in full swing, and some 70 men used to attend. Mrs. Barclay used to give up much of her time to the work amongst the soldiers, and I can well remember on my first visit to South Africa, some fifteen years ago, spending the evening at her hospitable home and was glad to find that soldiers were always welcome in her house. She used to spend much

time in the Home when it was in Caledon Street, and her singing always attracted the men.

Bank Holidays are a time of special temptation to the soldiers, and so we used to plan Mission picnics to the seaside for such days, and would hold meetings on the rocks, and spend the happiest of happy days. Our Dutch workers were always well to the front on such occasions and got on splendidly with the soldiers. Christmas is generally very hot out at the Cape, but in spite of that the usual English dishes have to be provided, or the men would feel that it was not really Christmas. The counter-attraction of our Soldiers' Christmas dinners kept many a man out of the Canteen.

We must now turn to Natal. Very little had been done for the soldiers there till Mrs. Watson settled in that colony with her three daughters. She felt the need was great, and so opened a Home on her own account, in which a very good work was done. Having spent some days at Maritzburg, while this home was running, and having been in and out of the Home, it is possible to speak very highly of this work. When our Mission began to do more work in Natal, it was only natural that we should take up soldiers' work there as at Cape Town and Wynberg. Mrs.

Photo by Caney, Durban.

A NATAL RIVER SCENE.

Watson had left Natal and there was pressing need for something to be done, and so Mr. Walton opened a Home at Maritzburg early in 1896. General Cox came to the opening ceremony and declared the building open for soldiers' work. Again many of the local Ministers were present to express their sympathy with the work. Mr. Harris was placed in charge, and being a soldier's son took a deep interest in the work. Later on Mr. Harris took up other Mission work, and is now at one of our Mission stations working amongst the natives in Natal. Mr. Smyth for some time took charge of the home, and being an old soldier knew how to fit in with the men very well.

At Cape Town the general soldiers' work was placed in the charge of Mr. Percy Huskisson, who also took the actual working of the Wynberg Home, and Mr. Darroll, who had given much of his spare time to the work amongst the troops while he was in business, joined the Mission to take up the work at the Cape Town Home.

The above brief account of the many long years of work amongst the soldiers in South Africa will explain, perhaps, how it was that when the war broke out it was only natural that Mr. Percy Huskisson and Mr. Darroll should go to the front in the Western districts, while Mr. Smyth

pushed on in Natal from Maritzburg to Ladysmith, where he was finally shut in with the besieged garrison, and where he died of enteric fever.

With regard to the future of the work, very little had better be said, though it may be well to point out the present policy which we entertain. Our Mission feels that it has been in a strange way connected with soldiers in South Africa for many long years—in fact, ever since its foundation—and naturally, as the whole country is so well known to us, together with the various local conditions and peculiarities of work, we intend to develop our work amongst soldiers when the war is over. At Kimberley we have already a large marquee in the Camp, where Miss McCarthy and Miss Mutimer are at work, and Mr. Darroll is at Bloemfontein. We shall naturally wish to open permanent Homes at these places as well as at Pretoria and Johannesburg. We have a temporary home at Port Elizabeth, but it is not known whether any troops will be kept there when the war is over.

CHAPTER IX.

WORK AMONGST THE CAPE MOUNTED RIFLEMEN.

TOWARDS the close of 1890 our Mission started work amongst the Cape Mounted Riflemen, and some notice must be given of this splendid and efficient body of men to make the story of the war complete. It will be remembered by all how gallantly this body of troops has behaved during the war at Wepener and at other places.

Though the C.M.R., as it is always called, is a military body, it also does police duty in certain of the Eastern Provinces of Cape Colony, and frequently the men lead a very rough life.

Some are stationed at large centres such as Umtata and King Williamstown, and the latter place used to be the headquarters, though now it has been changed to Umtata. Many men have to live in small numbers at very out-of-the-way places amongst the natives in Tembuland, Pondoland, and Griqualand East, and in some

places only one or two men are to be found at a Station.

As almost nothing was being done for the men in their arduous lives, we decided to set apart a worker who should visit the C.M.R. camps on horseback, taking what accommodation he could get, and feeling his way from place to place.

Mr. Holt, who had been a Corporal in the Army Medical Corps, offered for this post, and was sent to the Eastern Provinces. Captain Sprigg was then in the C.M.R., and gave a very warm welcome to Mr. Holt; and, in fact, Captain Sprigg (now Major) was the prime mover and chief supporter of this branch of work. According to *The Cape Times*, it was stated when we started this branch of work the strength of the Force amounted to about 400, including officers and men. About a year later one of our workers amongst the C.M.R. gave the strength of that body as just double this number, and at present this latter figure is about correct. According to returns, it seems that for an average month the work was shown as follows:—During a month 49,290 miles were covered, 659 patrols were made, 26 horses, 22 head of cattle, and 210 sheep and goats were recovered, as well as 5 ostriches. This will give some idea as to the duties of the C.M.R.

Mr. Holt found an open door for work, as the men seemed to appreciate his good-natured Irish character. Towards the close of 1890 he wrote: "In some places, owing to the isolated position of the camp, I have been obliged to throw myself on the hospitality of the men for a night's lodging, and have been invariably treated with the utmost good nature. Sankey's hymns are used at such times, the men joining in them heartily, choosing their own favourites which had been sung in the Old Country, long before the idea of coming out to South Africa had been thought of. Memories of home life, I am certain, were brought back, and it may be that some heart breathed a contrite sigh, which He, who despises not such, has noticed. . . . . At Southerville—a charming spot—I stayed from Saturday till Monday, and had the pleasure of conducting two services in the little building appropriated as a church. Service is conducted once a month by a clergyman who comes from a distance, and when the friend at whose hotel I am now staying knew that I was a missionary, he proposed my staying at the place instead of resuming my journey, as I had intended. He bore my expenses as I was doing duty as a minister for the time." This example shows the

various features of the work; it was very often found that the hotel keepers refused to take any payment for a night's board and lodging, when they understood the nature of the work, and many a "pastoral visit" was thus paid to the hotel keeper and his family. And in addition to the C.M.R. Mr. Holt was able to hold many meetings for both Europeans and natives; he also visited many native stations where the missionaries seemed glad to see a new face, and to welcome a kindly friend.

Sometimes, as Mr. Holt was riding from place to place he would get chances of speaking at short notice to Europeans or natives. Here is an example in his own words. "The most interesting occurrence, perhaps, in my tour took place just as I was finishing the last few miles of the journey. A friend at whose house I had been staying was riding with me, and we met a company of some thirty natives. 'You address these men, and I will interpret for you,' said this friend. So at a word from him in Kaffir, the natives all sat down in a semi-circle, and, having dismounted, we offered up prayer, and I had the joy of proclaiming the tidings of great joy for the first time in my life to the heathen."

It would amuse some English travellers to see

the kit which had to do duty for many months' ride. Mr. Holt could only take saddle bags, into which he had to cram all his clothing, as well as some Sankey's hymn books. It is a Fine Art to know how to make the most use of a few cubic inches on such an occasion. In the first fortnight he covered about 150 miles, holding many meetings on the way. It will be understood that there was nothing very much like a clergyman about Mr. Holt. His military training had given him a bearing that did not give the impression that he was a preacher. Then his dress was suited to his roaming life, and so no wonder people sometimes would hardly believe that he was anything of the nature of a Missionary. Add to all this that he has a most cheery, bright temperament, and looks every inch a soldier, and the disguise is complete. He said, on one occasion, "I met a fellow who is seeking God, and who, according to his statement, has been doing so for a very long time. When I told him I was a missionary, he laughed and said, 'Yes, you look very much like one!' Praise God He has made me one, whether I look like one or not. I told this chap all I knew and prayed with him." This little paragraph gives a wonderfully good insight into Mr. Holt's joyous, free nature.

At times he would visit a number of Mission stations, where he was always very hospitably received, and at such times he would help in the services amongst the natives on the station. Sometimes, at out-of-the-way places he would hold meetings in the dining rooms of hotels, by special request; and at other times he would have a meeting in the court house, at the invitation of the magistrate; or at another time the meeting might be held in a barrack room amongst the C. M. R. Services at such places would be very rare events, and there would be nothing to mark off Sundays from ordinary days.

In March, 1891, we find Mr. Holt writing: "Of the kindness shown to me by Missionaries and others I cannot speak too highly, and the hardships which I fully expected to have the joy of undergoing have not as yet come across my path; the visions of delightful nights spent on the veldt beyond the reach of people of my own colour remain as yet unfulfilled. A very interesting feature of the work is the opportunity, while staying at wayside hotels or stores, of saying a few words for Christ to men who seldom, or never, see a minister, and I find them quite willing for family prayer when I suggest it."

Being keen on the Temperance Question, Mr.

Holt frequently got signatures to the pledge, and was glad to speak on this topic, but he ever made the spiritual need of the men his first thought. Captain Sprigg took great interest in a C.M.R. Regimental Temperance Society, which I believe he started, and Mr. Holt used to help to form local branches of this society. On one occasion he went for a long tour with Mrs. Sprigg, whose presence was most helpful, and who introduced Mr. Holt to many new people.

Various were the duties of our Mounted Missionary to the C.M.R. For instance, the following throws an interesting side-light on his character and work. "Alice, Seymour, and outlying camps were visited," wrote Mr. Holt in April, 1891, "and travelling *viâ* Cathcart, I reached Coverside Camp for the Sunday, where we held an open air meeting, having a congregation of about twenty-five. Two other camps were visited, and on reaching a third, I was just in time to have the sad privilege of conducting the funeral service over the body of a young C.M.R. man who had been drowned whilst bathing and whose body was only recovered three or four days afterwards. As it was impossible to convey the body to the nearest Mission Station, a grave was made in a shady spot near the Camp,

and here his comrades, with heavy hearts, laid all that was left of one who was a special favourite. In addition to part of the Church of England Funeral Service, we sang two hymns, and I tried to say a few words of comfort and warning to those standing around."

Sometimes the services were rendered lively by opposition, as might naturally be expected. At one place Mr. Holt writes, "We had a rough time of it at this place. We held a meeting in Camp in an iron building, but were disturbed too much to do much good, big stones being thrown on to the roof; the window was flung open, and a trumpet blown long and loud into the room. The opposition defeated itself, for the respectable men took our side, and we had ultimately two fine meetings in the house of one of the married men." It should be added that opposition of this sort only took place at the larger Camps where there were a number of men who, very naturally being of a humorous nature, would club together to "have some fun." I doubt if a C.M.R. man could be "nasty" if he tried. In the small Camps there was no opposition of this sort, for the men so fully entered into the spirit that brought a man on horseback all round the country to try and help them. In some of the very small Camps

where there was only one man, or at the most two, the reception was always very warm and friendly, as a companion was a rare treat. And Mr. Holt makes the best companion imaginable, owing to his open-hearted nature.

In one month some twenty-three camps were visited, and about 440 miles ridden. Most of these camps were composed of from two to five men, and some were situated in most inaccessible places, rendering it out of the question to ride over a large part of the road, and even dangerous for walking, as leading the horse was risky, owing to the deep precipices on the side of the narrow pathway

For a humorous sketch we must insert the following account. Mr. Holt says: "A service in the vicinity of some of these isolated camps is a thing heretofore unknown, as may be judged from the fact that the children 'play at church' since my former visit; and on my arrival this time I was immediately confronted with the question, put by one of the children, 'Are you going to play at Church again?' Sometimes one is apt to lose one's way when travelling from place to place. One day I started at ten in the morning wishing to reach a camp which was about an hour and a half's distance off. (Distances in South Africa are always calculated by hours,

not miles.) I did not reach it till 6 p.m. However, I was rewarded by a magnificent view of the Katberg, which in my ignorance, I had ascended and crossed over. I was fortunate enough to meet a man who kindly put me on a short cut to the camp I was seeking to reach. I did not know then that the short cut is called 'break-my-neck-path.' Mine, however, is still intact. These C.M.R. men are constantly called on to make these rides as a matter of duty."

When a camp is visited for the first time surprise is often manifested by the men when the object is made known. When a hymn is proposed or a little reading of Scripture, the idea strikes some of the men as a little ludicrous. "One man the other day," writes Mr. Holt, "was very much tickled by my proposing to read a portion of Scripture; it never seemed to have occurred to him that the Bible could be read in any place but a church. Some of the men are very grateful for my visit. One said, 'If ministers would take an interest in us we should be better men, but when they come to hold a service near by they never come to see us, we seem to be beneath them. This camp has been here for three years, but we have never had anything in the shape of a minister here before.' Another man said, 'Don't be dis-

couraged if you don't see much result at first; remember we have never had anyone to speak to us as you are doing now, and Rome was not built in a day.' Occasionally the men will apologize for taking a 'nip' of P.D. in my presence, and when I tell them that I have often been 'under the influence' myself, a fellow-feeling springs up between us, and an opportunity is offered of telling them of Him whose 'love is better than wine.'

"The other day I am afraid my horse would not have blessed me if he could have spoken. I kept him trudging along in a nasty, misty, rainy day from nine in the morning till about eight at night, trying to find a camp which I should have reached in three hours. The population is very sparse in that particular spot, and where there are any houses they are hidden away in kloofs, and from the road they are invisible. Just as I had made up my mind for an all-night's walk (it was too wet to lie down), I came across a Kaffir, who conducted me to a trader's store, where I was made comfortable, and slept most profoundly in a delicious bed made of blankets on the floor, and felt thankful that I had only two hours of darkness for my ride instead of the whole night."

No wonder such a sunny spirit, so self-forgetting that at such a time it could only think of the

horse's inconvenience and not his own, won its way round the country. If any further evidence of the triumphing spirit of a real Christian is needed, let us add the following note which Holt sent down to headquarters at the close of the year. 'Rain has fallen plentifully in these parts, and two or three times, in spite of having a mackintosh, I have had to change my clothes. To-day I rode about eighteen miles, and all the way the rain kept me company. I consoled myself with the thought, as I sat on the saddle in wet trousers, that when I reached the end of my journey I would have a change of clothing. But when I sought for a nether garment which I had carefully stowed away in my saddle bags in the morning, I found that the rain had penetrated into it. However, necessity is the mother of invention. I found that the jacket of my sleeping suit would answer my purpose just as well, and I soon sat down in dry things. What a precious Master Christ is. What a joy it is to let Him see that we love to serve Him, even when we get wet through. Truly,

> If all the world my Saviour knew,
> All the world would love Him too,

I am persuaded that nothing shall separate me from the love of God."

A friend promised to support an extra worker to keep Mr. Holt company, and so Mr. Hill took up this work for some time, but found a more suitable sphere in holding Missions at various small towns and villages, which he had thus come to know. He was finally set apart for this special work which was needed as badly as the work amongst the C.M.R., and he held many very successful Missions in the Eastern Provinces.

In 1894 Mr. Holt married, and his wife settled down in a small village, where she could have Christian work to do, while her husband went for tours amongst the C.M.R., and returned every now and then to his new headquarters. It was, however, felt that the work was specially the sphere for an unmarried man, and so Mr. Holt was placed in charge of a new Mission Station in Tembuland, where he has found a large sphere of usefulness.

At present we have no worker amongst the C.M.R., and should this catch the eye of anyone who knows how to rough it without complaining, and who feels he has a message burning in his heart to pass on to other men, and who will feel at home at C.M.R. camps, we shall be most glad to get into correspondence with him. Of course many of the men in the C.M.R. come from good families at home, and so someone from their own

rank in life would be needed to reach them. A self-supporting man would find his way much more open than a man who could not pay his expenses, as this would at once stop the mouths of those who would say that he had taken the work up for the sake of "filthy lucre"—a criticism that would be sure to be made.

There is a great sphere of work in this direction, but the work needs a very special man who has a gift for personal dealing, and who does not thirst after talking to large crowds.

We must now conclude this very brief and imperfect sketch of the work amongst soldiers in South Africa. Very much more could be written, but probably this bird's-eye view may give a fairly accurate and vivid picture of the work being done during the last twenty years, and during the war.

Very little reference has been made to the work of others during the war, as it is said that several other people intend to describe their own work, and so to say much about their work would not be a friendly act. Let us close, however, by emphasizing the fact that many other organizations have done good work amongst the soldiers who are fighting.

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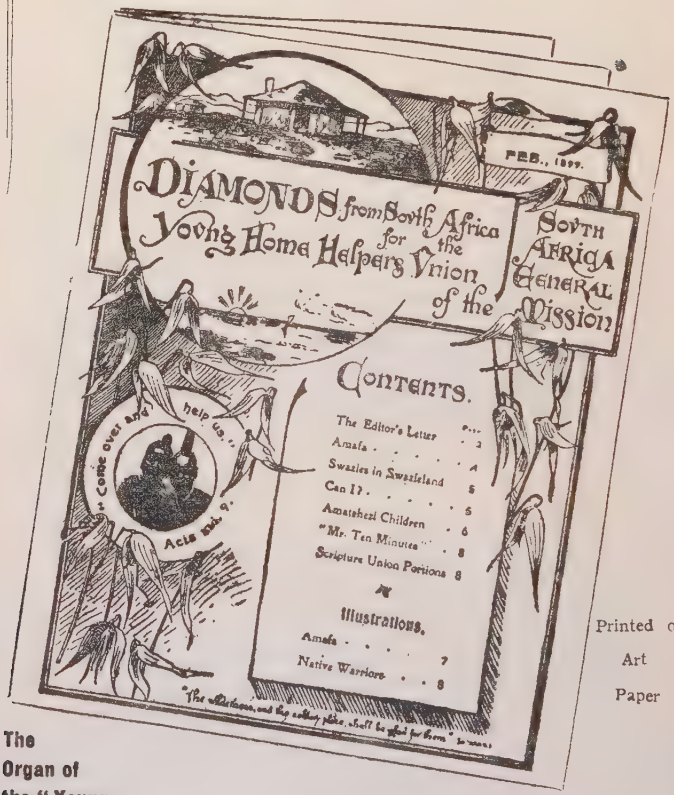

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